Savage Coast Campaign Book

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Foreword

A crimson shadow covers this lush land.

I have spent much of my life exploring the Savage Coast, discovering its history and learning its secrets. I saw the effects of the Red Curse before most people knew of it—and I saw the results when the curse spread to all parts of this beautiful expanse.

I have undertaken the task of creating a history of the Red Curse, from theories about its origins to descriptions of its varied effects. I will describe the history of the Inheritors, those people who have learned to manipulate the powers of the curse, and I will tell of our efforts to end the reign of the curse.

I do this for the people of the Savage Coast, so that should my efforts end in failure, they might learn, and through perseverance, find a way to terminate the affliction that now dominates and diminishes this region.

I will attempt to describe the nations of the coast and the peoples of those nations in order to show what the coast was like before the coming of the curse.

Most importantly, I will try find a way to lift the ruby darkness from our homes.

-- *The Chronicle of the Curse*
by Don Luis de Manzanas,
Baronet of Aranjuez,
Crimson Inheritor

Welcome to the Savage Coast.

You are now reading the results of an experiment that worked.
In 1992, I was asked to work on a product that eventually became known as the RED STEEL® campaign. I would take some excellent material that Bruce Heard had been publishing in DRAGON® Magazine, and I would turn it into an accessory for the AD&D® game. As originally envisioned, it would be a sort of mini-setting, accompanied by an audio CD with background music. I began writing in 1993, and the original boxed set was published in late 1994. In early 1995, the supplement, *Savage Baronies,* was released.

By that time, the RED STEEL campaign had received a lot of support and gotten some very favorable reviews. So we decided to do a relaunch, offering the lands of the Savage Coast as a full line of products. You hold the results of that decision in your hands, a book that combines all the material from the original RED STEEL campaign set and the *Savage Baronies* supplement, along with some new material. More supplements will follow.

I offer my sincere thanks to the readers and players who made this experiment a success, allowing the RED STEEL campaign to continue. I have gathered comments and criticisms from many of you and from playtests and tournaments, and I have tried to incorporate much of your advice into the setting. To those of you who have just discovered the setting, thanks for giving it a try.

I hope you all enjoy *The SAVAGE COAST™ Campaign Book* as much as I enjoyed writing it.

Tim Beach, May 1995

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Overview

The Savage Coast is a land of diversity and adventure. I have been surprised many times in my extensive travels. In this journal, I have attempted to organize my thoughts, so that those who read my work might more easily benefit from this knowledge.

I offer first a summation of my knowledge, an overview— perhaps the details that I might reveal to a visitor new to the Savage Coast.

—The Chronicle of the Curse
by Don Luis de Manzanas

The lands of the Savage Coast give rise to larger-than-life characters and marvelous adventures. Within this region live not only humans of assorted cultures, but also such races as the ee'aar, lizard kin, rakastas, lupins, and tortles. Moreover, these beings also wield unusual powers granted them by the Red Curse, abilities often accompanied by hideous mutations. Exciting adventures arise out of the struggle to control those powers and acquire the magical metal, *red steel*, as well as from the natural conflicts of the region's divergent races and cultures.

This book contains all the information needed for a SAVAGE COAST™ campaign, from descriptions of its nations to rules for creating player characters, and from details on the Legacies of the Red Curse to advice for running adventures. The DM will need to become familiar with all the information contained within, but much of it is aimed at the players as well.

The quantity of material presented here may seem daunting. To ease the burden of digesting the details, this book has been organized into three sections:

° An Atlas of the Savage Coast. This details the lands of the region, including information on geography, culture, religion, customs, and attitudes.
° Characters of the Savage Coast. Devoted to rules, this section covers procedures for generating player characters for SAVAGE COAST campaigns, including new kits, proficiencies, and weapons. Also included are the special rules for the setting, such as the influences of the Red Curse and panache rules.
° Adventures on the Savage Coast. This final portion of the book deals with general campaign directions and background, providing an overview of possible adventures. In addition, a few short quests and one major adventure are included.

The remainder of this section is devoted to a short overview of the campaign setting, introducing several key concepts important in later portions of the text.

Warning! *Despite the fact that much of this book contains player information, the DM may wish to keep the secrets within these pages hidden from players. For this reason, it is recommended that the DM read through the material first to decide what sections are appropriate for players to read.*

Campaign Flavor

The SAVAGE COAST campaign setting is unique in many ways. Though this fantasy setting has magic, heroes, and everything else one would expect, the new swashbuckling and panache rules add both individual flavor and style. The land also lends fantastic, magical powers to all types of player characters. Still, it is a savage frontier, suffering under a magical bane called the Red Curse.

On the Savage Coast, many nonhuman races coexist with humans, and many are available as player character races. Players can choose to be canine, feline, or even turtle people. The curse of the Savage Coast also misshapes some people physically, while granting them spell-like powers known as Legacies. Most player characters have one of these powers, and some even gain additional Legacies.

To avoid the deforming effects of the Red Curse, a person must wear *cinnabryl*, a rare magical ore. As its magical energy depletes with time, *cinnabryl* becomes *red steel*. This lightweight yet durable metal can be forged into weapons capable of striking even magical creatures not wounded by normal steel. Naturally, then, *cinnabryl* is coveted, its acquisition motivating individuals to adventure and nations to war.

The SAVAGE COAST campaign is one of survival and battle, of exploration and politics. It can lead to great power—both political and personal—for player characters who are bold enough to seize it.

Pronunciation

The languages of the Savage Baronies (Espa and Verdan) are loosely based on Spanish and Portuguese. The following guide is designed for readers unfamiliar with these languages.

In general, the vowels of these languages are pronounced in the Latin style, as follows:

a	*ah* as in *father*
e	*eh* as in *pet* (ranging to *ay* as in *fray*)
i	*ee* as in *clean* (sometimes *ih* as in *hit*)
o	*o* as in *boat*
u	*oo* as in *boot*

When two vowels appear together, they are often rolled together (elided). For example, the correct pronunciation of Narvaez is *Nahr-bah-ess*. Said quickly, however, it sounds more like *Nahr-bise*. The combination "ão" generally appears together and is pronounced with a final nasal sound: *ah-ohn*.

As for consonants, the letter "j" is almost always pronounced in the same way as the letter "h," but a bit more forcefully, while the letter "v" sounds similar to "b." The symbol "ñ" is pronounced almost like *ny*, so that señor is pronounced almost like *sen-yor*. The letter "r" is often lightly trilled. The symbol "ç" is approximated by a hard *s* (almost a "ts"), so Leãoça is pronounced *Leh-ah-OH-tsa*.

These pronunciations are approximate. The actual sounds tend to be more elegant than these guidelines might lead oneto believe. Readers are encouraged to listen to native speakers (as in language audiotapes) for true pronunciations.

What Is Needed to Play

This accessory describes the Savage Coast, a 2,000-mile frontier coastline. To play in this area, one needs only this book and the AD&D® game rules—*Player's Handbook* (*PHB*), *DUNGEON MASTER® Guide* (*DMG*), and the MONSTROUS MANUAL™ tome. However, some character classes and races may necessitate additional sources (especially the PHBRs or "Complete Handbooks"). For example, to play a goblinoid character, *The Complete Book of Humanoids* would be necessary.

Because this setting is intended primarily as an addition to an existing campaign, material on any of the campaign worlds published by TSR, Inc. can be helpful. However, the SAVAGE COAST setting can be used independently.

Other Sources

Though the Savage Coast can exist as virtually any new frontier, its official location is the MYSTARA® campaign setting, about 2,000 miles west of the lands of the "Known World."

The Savage Coast was introduced in a module of the same name (D&D game Expert adventure X9), and later expanded in "Tortles of the Purple Sage," which appeared in DUNGEON® Adventures issues 6 and 7. These materials describe the Savage Coast of several years ago.

The more recent past of the area has been described in DRAGON® Magazine, in two series of articles: "The Princess Ark" and the "Known World Grimoire." Most of those articles have been brought together in the D&D game accessory *Champions of Mystara*, which describes the travels of the crew of a flying ship.

In this setting, some information from those previous sources has been modified in varying degrees. Most modifications were necessitated by the change from the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game to the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game. Other changes were made to more tightly unify the structure, add to the adventuring potential, and allow a more fully developed setting. In the case of any disagreements among sources, the material in this campaign book takes precedence.

Because of the many changes, previous source materials are not necessarily helpful. If players possess any of those materials, the DM should explain their knowledge as legends, ancient history, or apocryphal stories. For instance, the logs of the Princess Ark, as found in *Champions of Mystara*, should be explained as a good story created by a crew with a cultural bias that caused them to translate many things into their own terms, or to create suppositions when facts were unknown.

Helpful Materials

Certain other materials can prove useful for a more fully realized campaign. Since the Savage Coast is "officially" part of the MYSTARA campaign setting, some DMs might wish to peruse the *Poor Wizard's Almanac* (AC 1010 or AC 1011) or other materials about the MYSTARA campaign. Of particular interest is the *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM® Appendix* for the MYSTARA campaign setting. Most of its monsters can be used on the Savage Coast without too much alteration. Where those monsters are mentioned in this accessory, approximate equivalents from the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome are given as well.

As mentioned, the PHBR series is also useful. The *Complete Fighter's Handbook* and the *Complete Book of Humanoids* are especially valuable for campaign expansion.

Also potentially useful is the historical sourcebook HR4, *A Mighty Fortress*, which describes the Elizabethan age as a setting for the AD&D game. Some material herein comes from that source.

Central Themes

Most of the Savage Coast is a brutal land, often plagued by wars. Decades ago, the riffraff of the world—pariahs, criminals, and unscrupulous adventurers—colonized its shores on quests for wealth and power. Sometimes, refugees fleeing humanoid invasions and other scourges migrated to the Savage Coast and remained in the unforgiving land.

The Savage Coast has a pronounced "frontier" feel: unexplored areas, old ruins, hostile natives, and so forth. Very little law exists, except as enforced by local nobles or the personally powerful. Often, the law of the jungle prevails. Indeed, the forces of good are an exception more than a rule.

Part of the setting's frontier nature results from the existence of several native races beyond the standard humans, elves, dwarves, and halflings. Some of the native cultures could be described as civilized, while others are either relatively savage or so radically different from human norms as to be unrecognizable. These races include the canine lupins, feline rakastas, reptilian tortles and lizard men, and others. Most are available for use as player characters; see the "Player Characters" chapter later in this book for details.

New fencing and panache rules have also been added to flesh out the swashbuckling character. In defiance of this harsh, unforgiving environment, the hero is revered not only for prowess and strength, but for style. A more detailed description of these rules appears in the "Proficiencies" chapter.

PCs have access to new kits, proficiencies, and equipment; explanations appear in the "Character Kits," "Proficiencies" and "Equipment and Economics" chapters, respectively. The kits describe character roles unique or important to the Savage Coast, while the new proficiencies relate directly to the unusual nature of the area. New equipment includes several new weapons, such as boomerangs and firearms.

Last, but definitely not least, the Red Curse covers most of the Savage Coast, directly or indirectly affecting all those who live there. The magical powers (Legacies) it grants and the horrible deformations it inflicts are fully described in "The Curse and the Legacies," but the following overview explains the basic concepts.

The Red Curse and Legacies

What truly sets this region apart from other places is the curse it bears. Ages ago, a great tragedy befell the land, and ever since, the inhabitants have suffered for it.

The Red Curse's physical manifestation in the region, a red dust called *vermeil*, permeates the affected territory and beyond. *Vermeil* extends throughout the reaches of the cursed land and into the lands bordering the curse, lending a red cast to everything within it, from a person's skin to the money that changes hands and the metal used to forge weapons. Red dust storms, red rain, crimson plants, and a pinkish sky—all these things distinguish the lands of the Savage Coast. Because the people of the Savage Coast bear this red tint, inhabitants easily recognize newcomers to the land. Although distinguished by *vermeil*, some outer areas marked by this reddish tint are not directly under the effects of the Red Curse. This area surrounding the cursed lands is called the Haze. The Haze creates a type of buffer zone into which outsiders can journey without being stricken by the curse and Afflicted can travel without detriment.

Within the cursed region, mutations and powers mark the people and animals. Some manage to hold off the deforming effects by wearing *cinnabryl* or using *maintain* spells. A select few, known as Inheritors, are even able to collect more than one Legacy within themselves, thereby gaining a great benefit from the Red Curse. Therefore, player characters in this setting can acquire amazing powers with which they can perform super-heroic deeds. That makes the SAVAGE COAST setting a wonderful place for adventure.

Immortals

Unlike most other worlds for the AD&D game, the SAVAGE COAST campaign setting does not have gods; instead, it has Immortals. In many ways, Immortals resemble gods: They have great power, they create religions, and they grant clerical spells to their followers. However, because they were once mortal, Immortals are usually more willing to meddle with mortals than are the gods of other worlds. It is even possible for player characters to attain immortality, though rules for such a change are not included in this accessory. "The Campaign" chapter presents a brief section on the Immortals important to the Savage Coast.

The Savage Coast

The SAVAGE COAST setting can exist anywhere a frontier coastline could be located on the DM's favorite game world. However, care should be taken to place the area where it will not upset the

established history of the rest of the world. For more information on fitting the Savage Coast into worlds other than Mystara, see "The Campaign."

Geography and Overview

As mentioned, the Savage Coast is a frontier area, home to many colonies. Some of the colonies have existed for many years, long enough to be establishing their own satellite colonies. Some of the nations and cities have populations in the thousands. Other villages are new, while some have risen, fallen, and now lie in ruins.

At the region's far eastern end lies the city of Slagovich,often considered the gateway to the Savage Coast. Slagovich is a city of political intrigue. While not actually within the cursed region itself, Slagovich serves as a clearing point for goods moving to and from the Savage Coast.

To the north of Slagovich lies the country of Hule, an empire ruled by a hagiarchy. Most of Hule is also free of the Red Curse, extending far into the borderlands, and its government has recently decreed that its people must stay away from the Savage Coast and its curse.

West of Hule, and still north of the cursed lands, are the Yazak Steppes. This area is home to goblins and other humanoids, who occasionally raid the settled lands to the south.

Many humanoids live in other nearby places free of the curse: the Great Northway Lands (west of the Yazak Steppes) and the Arm of the Immortals (a short distance across the sea to the west of the Savage Coast). Orcs inhabit the jungles of the Orc's Head Peninsula at the western end of the Savage Coast; most of these areas lie well within the Haze.

In the main cursed lands themselves, which cover almost 2,000 miles of coastline, dozens of petty nobles have appeared, each ruling a small area. Thus, the Savage Coast holds numerous duchies, counties, and earldoms, as well as a few places audacious enough to call themselves kingdoms. Humans rule most of the eastern Savage Coast, while nonhuman nations cover most of the west.

Savage Coast Nations and States

Slagovich is one of several city-states on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Hule. The City-States (as they are collectively known) are inhabited mostly by humans. Mostly self-absorbed, these sovereign states band together only temporarily, and only in the face of great danger.

On the western coast of the Gulf of Hule, a number of small states and baronies, collectively known as the Savage Baronies, were set up by explorers and conquerors who adventured in the area and then settled there. These baronies (like many other nations of the Savage Coast) once covered more area, but they expanded too fast, and the recent wars that swept the coast set them back. This has left both ruins for the player characters to explore and lands to take for themselves.

West of the Savage Baronies are tribal lands belonging to the turtlelike humanoids (tortles) and to various goblin, orc, and gnoll tribes. Past those are the "kingdoms" of Robrenn and Eusdria, both formerly barbaric societies that have recently evolved a semifeudal form of government. Robrenn is a forested land dominated by druids and followers of the druidic way. Eusdria is home to warriors who have been known to go raiding in longships, creating stories remembered in epic poems by their skalds.

The most important nonhuman countries of the Savage Coast include Renardy, home to the canine lupins, and Bellayne, home to the feline rakastas. Lupins and rakastas are both descended from nomads who roamed the steppes to the north. Eventually, they settled and adopted a feudal style of government. Renardy has close ties to the Savage Baronies, both economic and cultural. Bellayne still counts several nomadic rakasta tribes as part of its population. Its government comprises a strange mix of feudalism, warrior codes, and mysticism.

Farther west lies the nation of Herath. Known as a land of mages, this was once home to the mysterious araneas, a race of arachnid spellcasters. Herath is traditionally isolationist, but the nation has become more friendly with its neighbors in the wake of a recent war that nearly destroyed them all.

Above Herath, on the eastern shore of Trident Bay, is an area known as the Bayou. This great marsh and the surrounding regions are home to three races of lizard kin: the shazaks, much like the lizard men described in the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome; the more barbaric gurrash, also called "gator" men; and the diminutive caymas. Each race of lizard kin has its own nation. To the south and west of the Bayou, two regions are home to loose confederacies of tribes. On the southern shore of Trident Bay the wallaras make their home; also known as chameleon men, this race of humanoids is distantly related to dragons. South of the wallaras live the phanatons, a race of monkeylike humanoids who glide from tree to tree in their forest homes.

The phanatons and wallaras live in the northern part of the Orc's Head peninsula. In the midwestern part of the peninsula lies the nation of Nimmur. Once home to winged minotaurs known as enduks, Nimmur is now a nation of manscorpions. Recently, enduks and their allies, flying elves known as ee'aar, have retaken a small part of Nimmur and established a small, independent state. The southern part of the peninsula is home to many tribes of savage orcs.

A Brief History

According to the most accepted local calendar, the year is A.C. 1010 (1,010 years after the crowning of the first emperor of Thyatis, the lands whence many of the Savage Coast's human colonists originate). Following is a migration timeline of peoples through the Savage Coast. For a more detailed history of the Savage Baronies region, especially over the last century, refer to "The Savage Baronies" chapter.

Four to Five Millennia Past: The first humans in the area, the Oltecs, arrived between 4,000 and 5,000 years ago. This coppery-skinned people brought arts, agriculture, and basic metalworking to the region. They are the reason for the predominance of somewhat dark skin among humans of the coast.

The Oltecs discovered the presence of the tortles and manscorpions, both races having scattered settlements along the central Savage Coast. Manscorpions were temperamental savages who lived in small bands and had few redeeming qualities. The tortles were harmless and easily dominated and have remained so ever since. For the last 4,000 years they have lived as peaceful farmers and hunters on the edges of other societies.

Had the Oltecs pushed farther west, they would have run into the araneas and the wallaras, both thriving civilizations at the time. The araneas were powerful, suspicious mages living in the forests south and east of Trident Bay, while the wallaras were wise, peaceful mystics in the mountains and plains south of Trident Bay.

Three Millennia Past: Elves appeared in the region roughly 3,300 years ago, spreading through the eastern and central Savage Coast. However, they did not significantly affect the local cultures because they did not intermingle.While elves and humans held power in the east, the enduks were created in the far west. Their first cities were built about 3,000 years ago on the Orc's Head peninsula.

About the same time, the araneas started to disappear, their web cities in the forests replaced by isolated towers inhabited by mages of elven and human form who kept lizard men, the ancestors of the shazaks, as servants and slaves. These folk began calling their land Herath.

Two and a Half Millennia Past: About 2,700 years ago, tribes of goblinoids arrived in the Yazak Steppes. Approximately 400 years later, both the elves and Oltecs were decimated by hordes of these goblinoids sweeping through the eastern Savage Coast. (Some elves remained in the areas that would later become Robrenn, Eusdria, Bellayne, and the Savage Baronies.) These same goblinoid hordes caused many lupin and rakasta tribes to relocate to the central part of the Savage Coast.

Seventeen Centuries Past: About 17 centuries ago, Nithian pharaohs sent expeditions to colonize the central and eastern Savage Coast. The Nithians (who have since been erased from human knowledge by the Immortals) were a dark-haired, dusky-skinned people, with a proud empire. The Nithians came into conflict with the manscorpions, driving them far to the west and causing them to unite their small bands into large tribes. The manscorpions eventually arrived in the nation of Nimmur, the then-thriving kingdom of the enduks, where they were welcomed.

Fifteen Centuries Past: About 1,500 years ago, a series of wars and disasters swept the region. For reasons unknown, the mages of Herath lashed out at the wallaras, resulting in the fall of wallaran civilization. Today, the wallaras remain peaceful, but primitive. At the end of the war, the people of Herath also released their lizard men servants and slaves into the Bayou, where they eventually became known as the shazaks. At about the same time, the manscorpions betrayed the enduks and conquered Nimmur, causing the noble, winged minotaurs to relocate to a peninsula across the sea to the west. Also at this time, the Nithians disappeared from their colonies, leaving behind a strong artistic and philosophical endowment, as well as various artifacts and structures. Dwarves first arrived on the Savage Coast not long after this, settling in some of the areas previously held by the Nithians.

Few major events transpired during the next 600 years, yet several changes occurred. The mages of Herath established a central government; the Nimmur of the manscorpions continued to grow in power; the tortles had a brief flirtation with civilization; and lupins and rakastas began to build permanent settlements. The phanatons and shazaks began to rise from complete savagery, forming tribal groups and a few semi-permanent settlements. Meanwhile, the goblins, orcs, gnolls, and related creatures grew in power.

Nine Centuries Past: About 900 years ago, another horde of goblinoids moved through the region, wiping out the few small cities the tortles had built, as well as driving lupins and rakastas west, where they came into conflict with the mages of Herath. In response, those mages created the gurrash to serve as warriors. When the gurrash also proved unsuitable, they were dumped into the Bayou, where they displaced the shazaks.

The shazaks were motivated to band more closely together and began building permanent villages. Some lupins and rakastas became mages in Herath, and Herath helped bring the ideas of law and government to those races.

Five Centuries Past: About 560 years ago, an influx of Traldar arrived, possibly fleeing religious

persecution in their homeland. They set up colonies along the coast, founding Slagovich and other city-states. The Traldar had lighter skin than the other humans in the area, being descended in part from Nithians and in part from the light-skinned Neathar. Primarily fishers and traders, the Traldar spread west slowly from Slagovich along the rivers. For the most part, except for the City-States, the Traldar were quickly assimilated by pre-existing cultures in the area. One exception was the group of humans who, with the elves and a few dwarves, founded the nation of Bellayne.

About 60 years later, other light-skinned humans moved into the area. These were barbarians from the north, driven to the Savage Coast by Hule. They founded settlements that eventually joined to become the states of Robrenn and Eusdria. Some elves and dwarves already lived in these areas. The elves allied with both Robrenn and Eusdria, while most dwarves allied with Eusdria. At roughly this same time, most of the people of Bellayne were wiped out by a mysterious plague. Many modern historians believe this to be the first recorded mention of the Red Curse. Also concurrent was the creation of the caymas, again by the mages of Herath. Most legends of dragons on the Savage Coast are from this time as well.

The rakastas moved into the ruins of Bellayne, allying with the remaining elves and humans. The lupins also established a homeland between Bellayne and Eusdria. Bellayne, Renardy, Eusdria, and Robrenn began evolving to varying degrees of feudalism, aided later by another influx of colonists.

The Past Century: The most recent wave of colonization began about a hundred years ago, bringing many humans to the area. These settlers brought with them ideas of true feudalism, including a social order consisting of nobles, knights, and peasants. The lupins of Renardy have emulated these cultures to the greatest extent, even adopting a derivation of their languages. Halflings also came to the Savage Coast, most settling in Eusdria, with a few in Robrenn, Bellayne, the Savage Baronies, and even Herath.

With this rash of colonization in the East and the growth of settlements in the center of the coast, the mages of Herath began expanding to the south. There, they came into conflict with the phanatons, who banded together even more firmly, having recently developed primitive government and law.

The people of the Savage Baronies also discovered the Red Curse. However, unlike earlier peoples, they did not succumb; they fought back and found ways to control it. Luckily, the Red Curse seemed to be limited to only certain areas of the Savage Coast.

For the last several decades, civilization has spread over the coast. Many sages say it spread too fast. Beginning about a decade ago, another series of devastating wars swept the Savage Coast. Hule attacked the City-States and the Savage Baronies. Tortles—for the first time in their history—revolted against their oppressors. Peasants in other places also revolted, as did colonies against their parent states. The gnolls, orcs, and goblins who lived along the coast rose against the humans and demihumans. The orcs of the Dark Jungle attacked the manscorpions of Nimmur, and the enduks and ee'aar took advantage of the distraction to attack as well. Border conflicts flared between Bellayne and Shazak; Bellayne and Renardy; Renardy and Eusdria; Eusdria and Robrenn; and among the Savage Baronies. The gurrash attacked the shazaks and the caymas. The goblins of the steppes formed another horde, sweeping into Herath. Natural and unnatural disasters occurred, and plagues moved through the land, accompanied by the expansion of the Red Curse.

The Land Now

The effects of the recent wars are still felt throughout the Savage Coast. Nations tend to be distrustful of one another, though individuals from differing states can still get along (people of conflicting nations often fought together against greater threats). When Herath was invaded about a year ago, the mages fought back but could not prevent the goblin hordes from destroying certain magical wards which had been holding back the Red Curse, causing it to sweep over most of the Savage Coast.

Now, thousands of years of ruins, from ancient Nithian pyramids to recently destroyed castles and villages, dot the coast. Paranoid states vie for power; hostile natives strive for survival. People twisted by the Red Curse roam the land and hide in secluded villages. People seek to control the magical metal *cinnabryl* for its ability to alleviate the curse; others seek the roots of the curse in an effort to eliminate it.

Adventure awaits those willing to face the challenges of the lands of the Savage Coast.

An Atlas of the Savage Coast

The diverse nations of the Savage Coast offer many opportunities for grand adventures. Even I, known as an intrepid explorer, have found sights wondrous or horrible enough to cause me to tremble. Over the years, as I have wandered the coastal lands and nearby territories, I have taken occasional notes and gathered keepsakes of various sorts, from the ancient Oltec glyph-stone I discovered in Torreón to the wheeled crossbow given to me by the diminutive caymas. My notes and mementos have enhanced my vivid memories of the many places I have visited, and I have committed much of my knowledge to the pages of this chronicle.

Because most visitors to the Savage Coast come from the east or the north, I believe it behooves to first discuss the nations found there; while they are not a part of the Savage Coast, they serve as a sort of gateway for travelers entering the cursed lands. These gateway lands include Yavdlom, the City States, and Hule. After my discussion of those lands, I will continue from east to west along the coast, from the Savage Baronies to the Orc's Head Peninsula and the Arm of the Immortals.

Though the Red Curse was once confined to small areas in the Savage Baronies, and it has since spread to most of the other lands of the coast, I believe that the key to lifting the curse can only be discovered through studying the history and lands of the coast. I have no doubt that the removal of the curse will require a grand quest that will surely take brave heroes from one end of the coast to the other. Thus, I feel I should offer as much information as possible about the many states and territories. Since I have spent the majority of my life in the Savage Baronies, I have given these small states extra attention.

—*The Chronicle of the Curse*
by Don Luis de Manzanas

The present population and cultural mix of the Savage Coast results from a series of migrations into the area, occurring at irregular intervals over the past few thousand years (as roughly described in the previous chapter). These large-scale relocations have involved peoples from numerous races and geographical areas; the result is a disparate set of societies, almost a mishmash of cultures. From the hot-blooded Espan civilizations of the Savage Baronies to the vikings of Eusdria and the fierce lizard kin of the Great Bayou, the Savage Coast presents a wide range of cultures. This introduction offers information on the cultures bordering the coastal region in the east.

The Serpent Peninsula

As mentioned in the last chapter, the actual Savage Coast is a 2,000-mile stretch of land situated between the Orc's Head Peninsula in the west (discussed in the "Other Places" chapter) and the Serpent Peninsula in the east. The Serpent Peninsula, named for the great variety and high numbers of snakes and similar creatures found in its jungles and swamps, divides the Sea of Dread from the Gulf of Hule and the Western Sea upon which the Savage Coast lies. The majority of this peninsula lies within the Haze, so while marked by *vermeil*, the Serpent Peninsula is not directly under the effect of the curse.

A peaceful culture of seers, Yavdlom dominates the Serpent Peninsula. Their culture centers on the island of Thanegia just south of the peninsula itself. The people of Yavdlom are essentially demi-elves, descendants of elven and dark-skinned human ancestors. Tall and ebony-skinned, they have slightly pointed ears; some even have the arched eyebrows typical of elves.

The Yavdlom culture combines both elven and human elements. A high percentage of precognitive or similar abilities among its citizens influences their culture in several ways. Fortunately, the seers of Yavdlom follow the teachings of the Immortal Yav, who encourages responsibility and cooperation, causing most of their influences to be quite positive.

Because only those people without prophetic ability can serve in government posts, all seers are relegated to advisory positions within a strict hierarchy according to ability. However, the seers determine which citizens become part of the nobility and how powerful they are, based on predictions regarding how many people they will greatly influence.

The seers of Yavdlom also affect other aspects of the culture, from religion to trade. The local economy, based on agriculture and trade, benefits from the advice of the seers.

Other groups on the peninsula include the Karimari of the Nakakande Rain Forest and the nomadic hunters (the coppery-skinned Urdukkabilas and the dark-skinned Karatunda) in the Konumtali Savannah. North of the peninsula, the influence of Yavdlom diminishes. In the east, the nation of Sind dominates, while on the eastern coast of the Gulf of Hule, a small handful of independent city-states rule.

The City-States

Together, the City-States and Savage Baronies bracket the Gulf of Hule. They are separated by a small arm of Hule, which touches the gulf's northern shores. Hule is a dangerous neighbor, constantly at odds with the smaller nations on its borders.

The City-States—Hojah, Nova Svoga, Slagovich, Zagora and Zvornik—are all about five centuries old. Each is ruled by a margrave (prince) who is essentially a hereditary dictator.

The humans of the City-States tend toward dark, curly, or wavy hair and reddish-brown skin. This results from a mix of Yavdlom, Oltec, and Traladaran background. Most are slightly shorter than average (roll only 1d10 for a modifier when determining height randomly as per the *PHB*). They prefer clothing that is dark and almost monotone, though bright scarves and sashes are worn for festivals.

Hojah

Capital: Shkodar (population 7,800—mostly humans, some dwarves and elves). Ruler: Margrave Bosit Hojah (human, former fighter). Typical NPC: seafaring trader.

Hojah (named for its founding family) is a merchant state, like Slagovich. However, while Slagovich trades by both land and sea, the island-state of Hojah trades only by sea. It deals mostly with the other City-States, the Savage Baronies, and the free towns of the region. This state competes fiercely with Slagovich for trade, and while currently at peace, armed conflicts between the two have occurred. Hojah remains on good terms with Zvornik.

Hojah maintains most of the lighthouses in the region and has the strongest navy and trade fleet. Because of Hojah's ships, pirates have a difficult time near the City-States.

Nova Svoga

Capital: Nova Svoga (population 5,300—mostly humans, some halflings). Ruler: Stefan Karvich (proud, capable high-level human warrior). Typical NPC: farmer or trapper.

A peaceful agricultural state located upriver from Zagora, Nova Svoga shares a very extensive border with Hule. The state suffered badly during the recent wars, during which the margrave and most of his heirs died. Stefan Karvich, the former leader of Nova Svoga's military, now serves as regent for Anya, the five-year-old heir to the throne.

Slagovich

Capital: Slagovich (population 17,400—mostly humans, a few demihumans). Ruler: Margrave Miosz II (human noble, age 24). Typical NPC: merchant or poor, urban peasant.

Slagovich is built on a plateau, next to a cliff overlooking the Gulf of Hule. The foot of the cliff opens into a large cavern for ships to sail through. A huge natural shaft connects this cavern to the center of the city. The people of Slagovich control a gate to the Elemental Plane of Water, and for a high fee, the shaft can be sealed and filled with water to bring a ship up to the level of the city. A water lock allows ships to enter the artificial harbor atop the plateau.

Hydraulic mechanisms permeate Slagovich. Drawbridges, water locks, and portcullises allow ships to move deep into the city along a series of canals to unload their goods. Sleds, pulled by a network of cables, cart scores of people up and down the city's steeper hills.

Slagovich boasts excellent engineers, many adventurers, a bustling merchant business, and a few wealthy nobles, but most of the common people are rather poor. Many houses, especially those farther from the harbor, look poorly maintained. Much of the city's mortar and stonework has a reddish-brown color. High, well defended walls protect Slagovich, except for the slums outside the city. Farms and undeveloped hilly acreage surround it.

The ruler of Slagovich, Miosz, ascended to the throne early in his childhood. Despite plots by Hule and an evil Inheritor (Zgozod of the Ruby), he kept his throne, mainly due to the intervention of his uncle Stavro. Stavro serves as an adviser to Miosz and leads the margrave's personal guard, the Knights of Halav—a small warrior brotherhood that has helped guide Slagovich into a relatively enlightened age.

Miosz has no love for Inheritors. They are unwelcome, though not persecuted, in the city. Inheritors who do enter Slagovich are watched closely.

The city exports *cinnabryl* to the Savage Baronies. When *cinnabryl* is exported (about twice a year), a body of Knights of Halav meet at sea with a small group of Inheritors, who pay for the *cinnabryl* with *red steel*. In Slagovich, *red steel* is used for weapons by the Knights of Halav and the city guard, but only the Knights and guard officers also wear *red steel* armor.

Zagora

Capital: Zagora (population 9,400—mostly humans, some elves and halflings). Ruler: Margrave Munte III (human, muscular, overweight fighter). Typical NPC: patriotic warrior.

Based along a river valley, Zagora shares a long border with Hule. Home to many warriors, Zagora

also tends to lead in defense of all the City-States.

Zvornik
Capital: Raska (population 6,700—mostly humans, some dwarves and halflings). Ruler: Margrave Galben Zvornik (human noble, age 87). Typical NPC: farmer or traveling trader.

Like Hojah, Zvornik is named for the family that first settled the region. Its population centers around the river, and its traders use small boats that travel the rivers and shorelines of the region. Zvornik competes with Slagovich in trade, sometimes violently, but they are currently at peace. Zvornik and Hojah are allies. However, the current margrave is quite old, and his heir tends toward aggression.

Hule

The land of Hule, also known as Great Hule and the Sanctified Land, is a large nation to the north of the Savage Coast's City-States and Savage Baronies. Primarily farmland, the nation is a hagiarchy, a government run by the holy men. Though many goblinoids and a few demihumans live in Hule, only humans participate directly in government. Nonhumans can, however, act as advisers to high officials.

The leader of Hule is a mysterious individual known only as the Master, the absolute dictator of the land. He leads the clergy in the worship of Hule's patron Immortal, Bozdogan, also known as Loki. Patron of deceit and mischief, Loki has manipulated the people of Hule to create a bureaucracy of liars and thieves. Political intrigue runs rampant in Hule, and to unite the nation, the Master sometimes finds it necessary to create an outside conflict. This has led to Hule's instigation of wars with its neighbors, including the City-States and the Savage Baronies.

The people of Hule are divided into many classes: holy men, diviners, hermits, prophets, clergy, and commoners (listed in order of decreasing importance). Holy men are the rulers, individuals who—if not actually clergy—have been somehow touched by the Immortals. The holy men comprise most of the nation's administration.

Diviners act as police, traveling the country freely, though sometimes in disguise. When not disguised, they wear red robes and black masks and carry a crystal amulet. The diviners search for criminals, not only thieves and murderers, but also those who have "wrong thoughts." Wrong thoughts include any ideas that disagree with the official state religion. Therefore, clerics and followers of other Immortals are criminals in Hule. Diviners also seek people worthy of government service, bringing likely candidates before the leaders of Hule for testing.

Hermits are people who claim to have had a vision from Bozdogan instructing them to live alone in the wilderness. Peasants sometimes seek out hermits for guidance.

Prophets travel the countryside, and while not government officials, are recognized for their great wisdom and judgment. They act as judges, and though they have no real power others almost always accept their decisions.

Clerics operate the local temples and shrines, guiding and instructing the people. They try to bring out the "holiness" in each person and even prepare some for testing by the diviners.

Commoners are just that: farmers, soldiers, merchants, and crafters. Most follow the state religion and lead relatively peaceful lives unless called to war.

Religious services occur every night in Hule, and once a week, clerics lead processions through towns or villages, searching for anything unusual that might be declared a miracle. Commoners usually attend services twice a week.

Hule currently remains at peace with the nations of the Savage Coast, recovering from the last set of wars. Huleans still plot and spy, however. Minor events related to Hule occur all the time, especially in the City-States and Savage Baronies.

The Savage Baronies

I feel it only appropriate that I begin my description of the Savage Coast with the Savage Baronies, including my homeland of Saragón. In some ways, these small states are misnamed, for they are certainly less "savage" than other areas of the Savage Coast. Still, battle is common, and not all the states are as civilized as my own. While there exists great variety in the baronies, they also share a number of common traits. Thus, it seems appropriate to talk about all of them together before delving into details regarding them individually.

—*The Chronicle of the Curse*
by Don Luis de Manzanas

This section details the homelands of most humans of the Savage Coast, lands in which many adventures begin. The Savage Baronies comprise nine small, independent nations that occupy the eastern reaches of the Savage Coast on the western shores of the Gulf of Hule. Each of the baronies was founded by adventurers and conquerors who entered the lands during a wave of colonization just over 100 years ago. Most of the founders were human, but the people of the baronies also include elves, dwarves, and a few halflings.

This introductory section gives an overview of the peoples of the Savage Baronies, the customs and prejudices they observe, their adjustment to the Red Curse, and their general environment. In addition, it offers a history of the region. The next few chapters describe each of the baronies in detail.

Of the nine small states, six are coastal nations, while three are landlocked. The strongest sea powers among the baronies are Vilaverde and Texeiras. Narvaez and Torreón, lands of mercenaries, supply soldiers for hire to many of the nations of the Savage Coast. The three "enlightened" states are those least repressive and most advanced baronies—Almarrón, Gargoña, and Saragón. The two remaining baronies, Guadalante and Cimmaron, are home to the Gauchos.

Nomenclature

Along the Savage Coast, someone or something from one of the Savage Baronies, is referred to as "baronial." For example, a "baronial long sword" is a long sword made in one of the nine states; a "Baronial" is any person from one of these small nations. The people of the baronies are also referred to as Los Guardianos, "the Guardians," because they defend the Savage Coast from Hule and other powers.

Other classifications refer to smaller groups of people or things. People are sometimes referred to according to the language they speak. Inhabitants of Vilaverde and Texeiras, who speak Verdan as a native language, are sometimes referred to as Verdans. Individuals from the other Savage Baronies are sometimes called Espans, because of their native tongue.

Each nation also has ways to refer to its inhabitants. Those from Texeiras call themselves Texeiran, while those from Vilaverde refer to themselves as Vilaverdan. Since the cultures of these two states are so closely related, items as well as people from both are sometimes called Verdan. Texeirans are easily offended on this score, because the word Verdan too closely resembles Vilaverdan. The people of Texeiras prefer to be called Texeirans, and woe betide the fool who refers to a Texeiran settlement as a "Verdan colony."

The baronies also have adjectival forms of their names; some have risen more from convention than from linguistic logic. While people from outside the baronies sometimes refer to items from the Espan-speaking states as Espan, Baronials seldom do. Adjectival forms for individual states follow:

Almarrón: Almarróñan
Cimmaron: Cimmaron
Gargoña: Gargoñan
Guadalante: Guadalantan
Narvaez: Narvaezan
Saragón: Saragóner
Texeiras: Texeiran
Torreón: Torreóner
Vilaverde: Vilaverdan

Examples include "That is a fine Cimmaron wheellock," "I was ambushed by Gargoñans," and "We hired Torreóner mercenaries."

In the baronies, the translations of place names seldom sound as romantic as the names

themselves. For example, while "Serra Sanguinea" translates as the still interesting "Bleeding Mountains," "Mina do Sul" has the descriptive, but rather boring, translation "South Mine." Most place names in the baronies are descriptive and refer to either something commonly seen in that area or the first thing an explorer noticed upon arrival.

Like place names, personal names are often descriptive. For example, the literal translation of "Miguel Hernando de Montoya" is "Miguel Hernando, of the Montoya district." The ruler of Vilaverde is Jorge o Temerário, or "Jorge the Intrepid."

People of the Savage Baronies

The vast majority of the inhabitants of the Savage Baronies are humans, descendants of the Ispans who colonized the area a century ago. Over time, the Ispan colonists split into two groups, Verdans and Espans. The vowel shift delineates the "birth" of a distinct cultural group. Natives of Oltec descent with strains of Nithian and Traladaran ancestry have also entered the mix. Some natives have remained isolated, but the majority intermarried with Ispans.

In addition, human colonists from Yavdlom intermarried with both Ispans and natives in Vilaverde and Texeiras, while colonists from faraway Ylaruam intermarried with the people in Saragón. These different influences created modern baronial inhabitants with a very mixed ancestry. It is rare to find a human who is of "pure" descent from any one group. However, a few Ispan households do exist, notably some of the older noble families who have avoided intermarrying with natives for at least the last few generations. Some natives also consider themselves "pure," not realizing their Oltec blood was mixed long ago with Nithian.

Resulting from this intermingling, humans of the Savage Baronies tend to be moderately dark-skinned. The Red Curse also causes red overtones. Most humans have straight, black or deep red hair.

Also, a few elves, dwarves, and halflings live in the Savage Baronies. Elves make up a significant portion of the population in Torreón, but they are also prominent in Narvaez. Additionally, a few elf families live scattered throughout the other baronies. Dwarves are common in Cimmaron but are seldom found in the other baronies; a handful still live among the elves of the Montoya district in Narvaez. Halflings are more often found in Cimmaron than any other barony, but they are not common even there.

Additionally, tortles live in some of the southern baronies, notably Cimmaron, Almarrón, and Narvaez. Other races—including lupins, rakastas, goblinoids, and lizard kin—visit throughout the baronies, but families from those races almost never settle down here. Lupins are the most frequent visitors to the region and are common sights in Vilaverde and Texeiras. Note that some Herathians do live here, but their disguises effectively prevent discovery.

Prejudices

In general, the people of the baronies are tolerant of folk who are different, having come from such a diverse background themselves. The least tolerant nation is Narvaez, but some individuals in each barony still dislike outsiders. While some national prejudice does exist among the people of the Savage Baronies, discrimination because of race is rare.

For the most part, humans, elves, dwarves, and halflings are considered equals in the Savage Baronies. They mingle freely and generally get along well with one another. People from other nations might be viewed with curiosity but are treated kindly. Visitors from the furred races (lupins and rakastas) are considered equals as well, though some more insular peasants, unaccustomed to seeing such folk, might view them with fear.

Goblinoids, having caused many problems for the baronies over the years, are usually met with disgust, fear, or anger. They are seldom welcome in the towns and cities of the Savage Baronies because they usually come to raid or steal. The presence of a goblinoid, even a peaceful one, might well cause a fight.

Lizard kin and the races of the Orc's Head Peninsula are rarely seen in the Savage Baronies. On the infrequent occasions when they do visit, they are subject to close scrutiny. Their odd appearances make them a fearful sight, even to the more educated people of the baronies. However, because they are an unknown quantity, individuals are usually given a chance to prove themselves and are judged on their individual merits. They remind many people of the peaceful tortles found in the southern baronies.

Tortles are a special case. While not derided because of their race, they are sometimes looked down upon because because of their peasant status. Like other peasants here, tortles are often characterized as slow and lazy, unwilling to work for a better life. Laziness is a great sin to Baronials, most of whom are staunch believers in the individual's power to succeed through hard work.

The attitude toward tortles typifies the wealth-related prejudices of Baronials. Many, but not all, members of the nobility look down on those who are less fortunate. The middle class—including

merchants, crafters, and adventurers—tends to view peasants with disdain. Peasants envy the wealthier folk but often forget or repudiate their origins if they come into money, looking down on those who remain peasants.

Conventions

Despite cultural differences, the Savage Baronies have many commonalities, ranging from language to dueling conventions. These often become a basis for comparison and competition. Inhabitants of each land believe their accent or dialect to be more pleasing than others, their variations of the dueling rules more noble, and that their coinage better. The following text points out many similarities to which few Baronials willingly admit.

Clothing

The people of the Savage Baronies usually wear simple, light, cotton clothing, though suede and leather are popular among the middle and upper classes, especially with Gauchos and Swashbucklers. Swashbucklers and Nobles also wear silks and velvets. Even the poorest people tend to wear at least one brightly-colored item of clothing, and Swashbucklers are positively vibrant in appearance.

Clothing is a status symbol among adventurers and the upper classes. Baronial society considers good taste in dress a virtue. Often, adventurers to carry spare clothing for occasions when they want to impress others.

Weapons and Equipment

Most equipment and weapons available in a standard AD&D game campaign can be found in the Savage Baronies. Items vary in popularity, however, depending on the exact barony.

Due to the spread of swashbuckling, plate mail, field plate, and full plate armor are rarely seen in the baronies, though a few Narvaezan nobles own suits of full plate. Breastplates, however, are extremely common and are worn even by Swashbucklers. Chain mail, ring mail, and scale mail are worn by mercenaries of Narvaez and Torreón and by warriors of Almarrón, Saragón, and Gargoña. Leather and studded leather armor are the types most likely to be found in Vilaverde, Texeiras, Cimmaron, and Guadalante.

Heavier armors are avoided by seafarers of the sea powers and mounted Gaucho warriors. Heavy armors are also avoided in Cimmaron because firearms are common, which all but negates the benefits of armor (see the "Equipment and Economics" chapter for details).

Cimmaron County is known for making and exporting *smokepowder* and wheellock pistols. These weapons are frequently seen throughout the Savage Coast, though somewhat less outside the Baronies.

The development of firearms has not diminished the popularity of other missile weapons. Hand crossbows are popular among the upper classes in Almarrón, Saragón, and Gargoña, and because they are reasonably common in the baronies, one can be purchased there for only 40 oros (gold pieces), rather than 300 gold pieces as listed in the *PHB*. Likewise, quarrels for a hand crossbow can be purchased for one dies (silver piece) each.

Larger crossbows, both light and heavy, are popular among the mercenaries of Narvaez and Torreón; the militias of Almarrón, Saragón, and Gargoña; and among the seafarers of Vilaverde and Texeiras. Short bows are popular with peasants throughout the baronies, as are long bows with adventurers. Gauchos of the Savage Baronies swing bolas. The lasso is also a common weapon in Cimmaron, Guadalante, Almarrón, and Saragón.

Blades are by far the preferred melee weapons of the Savage Baronies. Because the rapier is the favored armament of the Swashbuckler, it is common throughout the Baronies. Sabres are also popular with both Swashbucklers and Gauchos. Rapiers can be fitted with basket hilts (more common to sabres), but are more likely to have a swept hilt, which has the same game effects as the basket hilt.

Swept hilts are sometimes found on short swords as well. Both short swords and long swords are common in Narvaez and Torreón. These weapons tend to have more ornate hilts and guards than their counterparts outside the baronies. It is not unusual to see a forward-angled or curved guard on a long sword.

Daggers and similar weapons also tend to be very popular among Baronials, particularly peasants, due to their affordability. Swashbucklers prefer such arms as second weapons, wielded in the off hand, opposite a sabre or rapier; the main-gauche is another popular complement to the rapier. Gauchos like daggers for their many uses and have even been known to duel with daggers on occasion.

Red steel weapons are especially popular in the Savage Baronies; while the metal is not readily available, it is still much more common in the Savage Baronies than elsewhere.

The Immortals

Los Guardianos revere several Immortals, the SAVAGE COAST setting's equivalent to deities. Five Immortals are venerated throughout the baronies: the Ambassador (Masauwu), the General (Thor), the Judge (Tarastia), Milan (Mealiden Starwatcher), and Valerias. Some baronies have local patrons as well.

In Cimmaron, Kagyar is revered as the patron of artifice and the master of firearms. Al-Kalim is venerated in Saragón as the patron of scholarship, tolerance, and courage. He is the favorite of sages, wizards, and warriors who favor strategic planning.

Narvaez also reveres two Immortals: Ixion and the Inquisitor (Vanya). Ixion is the center of the Church of Narvaez. He is the sun, fire, life, power, and wisdom; citizens of Narvaez see him as the one Immortal worthy of true veneration. Much religious persecution has been carried out in his name. The Inquisitor acts as Ixion's avenging servant. She represents pride and the correctness of beliefs, seeking vengeance against those who do not follow the way of Ixion and punishing those who stray.

In Vilaverde, Texeiras, and Torreón, the Inquisitor is revered as Fanha (spelled "Faña" in Torreón). She represents war and pride in those states. She is the patron of warriors and the representation of self-defense and vindication, especially against those who deliver insults.

The Red Curse

As mentioned, the Red Curse has existed in baronial lands since well before they were the Savage Baronies, indeed, long before it was even known as the Red Curse. Until a year ago, the Red Curse was confined to a few isolated spots in the baronies: in valleys and swamps, on certain hills, in selected caverns, and even in the plains of some regions. For the most part, people native to the land just avoided these areas. However, the Ispan colonists and their descendants did not avoid the curse; they studied it.

At first, Baronials affected by the Red Curse simply suffered its effects, acquiring Legacies and becoming Afflicted. Wizards, priests, and sages studied Affliction but were largely unable to help its victims. Then, *cinnabryl* was discovered in what would eventually become Cimmaron. Years later, a Torreóner smith discovered the properties of depleted *cinnabryl* and named the substance *red steel*.

Cinnabryl and *Red Steel*

For almost 80 years, *cinnabryl* has been mined in the area now known as Cimmaron County. Deposits were also discovered in Terra Vermelha slightly over 40 years ago, and two mines in that region have been operated by Vilaverde for more than 10 years.

Red steel, once an extreme rarity because of the low demand for *cinnabryl*, has become much more common with the recent spread of the Red Curse. Because of the three *cinnabryl* mines in and near the Savage Baronies, *red steel* is more common in the Savage Baronies than anywhere else. The City-State of Slagovich even trades *cinnabryl* to the baronies in return for *red steel* weapons.

In the baronies, most users of *cinnabryl* are nobles, merchants, mercenaries, or adventurers. Obtaining *cinnabryl* is a primary motivation for people to become adventurers to make enough money to afford a steady supply of the metal.

Most traffic in *red steel* and *cinnabryl* is controlled by Inheritors. *Cinnabryl* is most common in Texeiras, Vilaverde, Cimmaron, and Saragón, and less likely to be found in the other baronies. *Red steel* is most common in Texeiras, Cimmaron, Saragón, Torreón, and Narvaez; less common in most of the other baronies; and rare in Guadalante. The related substance of *smokepowder* is most common in Cimmaron and somewhat less common in Guadalante, Vilaverde, and Texeiras. Narvaez and Torreón have both been trying to acquire large amounts of *smokepowder* to experiment with building large guns; none of these experiments have yet been successful.

Inheritors

Many Inheritors live in in Saragón, including the leader of the Order of Crimson. Inheritors are common throughout the baronies, except for Narvaez, where they are considered outlaws. Inheritors are hated and feared by the peasants of Torreón, who blame Inheritors for keeping *cinnabryl* from them, causing many peasants to become Afflicted.

Overall, Inheritors are accepted. Many are considered heroes, others as villains. Frequently, Inheritors (especially warriors) are famous in the baronies; a town enjoys the notoriety of claiming a heroic Inheritor as its own.

The Afflicted

As mentioned, numerous Afflicted live in Torreón, where peasants are too poor to buy *cinnabryl*. Most of these Afflicted have never used *cinnabryl*, so their defects are relatively mild.

In most of the baronies, Afflicted live in small enclaves isolated from other people, but not always. In Torreón, many Afflicted join the ranks of mercenary units; they make an effective fighting force, with the added factor that their appearance often surprises (and sometimes disgusts) opponents. In Narvaez, few become Afflicted because the church distributes *cinnabryl* and *maintain* spells. Those who are Afflicted usually move into small camps within the towns and villages, where they are attended by clergy.

In Almarrón, Saragón, and Gargoña, the rare Afflicted are generally cared for by family or friends. However, because some Afflicted cannot stand the thought of being seen by others, they run off to live solitary existences in the wilderness.

All baronies except Narvaez, Almarrón, Saragón, and Gargoña have villages formed by Afflicted individuals. Very often, Afflicted are shunned; in response, many gather to build enclaves where they need only traffic among themselves. For the most part, these are squalid shacks of forgotten remnants, but a few are clean and well-built. Afflicted villages typically boast fewer than 30 people and are located away from main roads and trails. Common folk happily avoid the villages of Afflicted. People in these villages seldom hold Inheritors in high regard, even Inheritors who do become Afflicted.

Threats

The Savage Baronies face many threats to their continued existence, both internal and external. Most threats have been around for decades, and Baronials have established ways to deal with them. However, as evidenced by the last decade, occasional surprises call for extraordinary measures. What follows serves as a quick reference regarding the individual threats.

Hule

The Sanctified Land, Hule, is a nation run by its clergy. The leader of Hule is the Master, a mysterious dictator who leads the nation's veneration of Bozdogan (or Loki), patron of deceit and mischief. Political intrigue within Hule often leads the Master to start an external conflict to unite his people and bring temporary stability to his nation again.

Hule is a repressive and often aggressive state. While currently at peace with the other nations of the coast, Hule sends spies in many directions and regularly launches small plots to upset stability in foreign regimes.

The Yazak Steppes

The Yazak Steppes are home to many tribes of goblinoids, notably the so-called "great tribes." The Hupkur, composed of hobgoblins and ogres, is the strongest tribe, but they are located far from the Savage Baronies. A recent alliance between Dankut (orcs and trolls) and Kuttai (orcs and goblins) has many Baronials worried; the alliance is close enough to strike, and an alliance between great tribes almost always preludes an invasion. The closest great tribe to the baronies is the goblin Gosluk; members of this tribe raid into the baronies with some regularity. (For more information on the goblinoids, see the "Other Places" chapter.)

The Yazi

The Yazi are goblinoids of the coastal regions. Most prominent of them, at least to observers in the Savage baronies, are the gnolls of El Grande Carrascal and goblins of the Badlands. Gnoll lands have borders with Almarrón, Saragón, Gargoña, Cimmaron, and Guadalante; these nations suffer the gnolls' presence in the region to keep their neighboring baronies from gaining territory in El Grande Carrascal. Gnolls are actually relatively civilized; they both negotiate and engage in honest trade, and they do not immediately attack humans or demihumans.

Goblins are another matter. They are definitely warlike, but recent losses keep them in line for the most part. Occasionally, rumors about the Badlands goblins having commerce with the Gosluk of the Yazak Steppes are spread, but the accuracy of such claims is questionable.

Other Nations

The baronies have few problems with nations other than Hule. Of course, relations between the Savage Baronies and the City-States on the eastern Gulf of Hule are unstable because both groups vie for control of the seas. The baronies effectively block commerce between the City-States and the rest of the coast, and pirates based in Vilaverde and Texeiras are known to raid ships from the City-States. The City-States occasionally discuss banding together to destroy the navies of the baronies. Fortunately for the baronies, the City-States are about as likely to work together as are the Savage Baronies themselves.

The baronies also trade with nations of the Savage Coast and maintain colonies and outposts in

these distant lands. The coastal nations outside the Baronies depend on Texeiran and Vilaverdan shipping for much of their commerce, so they do not want to disrupt such shipping by contesting. Though difficulties occasionally arise, the nations of the Savage Coast tend to be on friendly terms with the baronies.

Renardy, in particular, has close ties with the baronies, especially Torreón. The Renardois have adopted several of the styles and conventions of Los Guardianos, from their form of government to their swashbuckling style and dueling conventions.

The nations east and south of the City-States, such as Yavdlom and distant Thyatis, are too far away to be of concern to the Savage Baronies. It is possible that Yavdlom might send more colonists or expeditions to the region, but Yavdlom is peaceful, so the possibility represents a trading opportunity more than a threat. Also, it is unlikely Thyatis would be willing or able to devote the time and manpower necessary to tame and reclaim the other, fiercely independent Savage Baronies.

Internal Strife

The Savage Baronies have often been their own greatest threat. Conflicts within a barony and clashes between baronies are all too common. Internal conflicts are discussed in the entries for each barony.

As for conflicts between baronies, Torreón has periodic disagreements with Vilaverde and Texeiras over *cinnabryl* deposits in Terra Vermelha; because Almarrón's former dictator hired Torreóner mercenaries to enforce his will, Almarróñans sneer at Torreón. Narvaez does not get along well with any other baronies, particularly Saragón, which it regards as a haven for heretics and the spawn of chaos. Narvaez also wants to compete with the Vilaverdan and Texeiran navies, which escalates tensions there.

Except for their problems with Narvaez, the sea powers get along with all the baronies—except each other. Texeiras and Vilaverde are competitive, and their ships often come into conflict. Texeiras grants letters of marque, sanctioning privateers to prey on Vilaverdan shipping. Likewise, ships from Vilaverde attack Texeiran ships, whether they have letters of marque or not; the Vilaverdan government has been known to grant a retroactive letter of marque to captains who make port in Porto Preto after having raided Texeiran shipping for some months.

Except as mentioned, the other Savage Baronies get along with their neighbors. In particular, Gargoña maintains neutrality in most conflicts. It is not unusual for a Gargoñan delegate in the Signatory Council to be elected leader of the council.

The Environment

The climate is warm temperate to subtropical. Overall, this climate is favorable for human habitation. The weather is seldom harsh; it snows in the northern baronies as often as once a decade. Rains come with some frequency, though most downpours soak the coasts rather than traveling far inland. Storms are not uncommon, and the coastal baronies suffer occasional hurricanes. Some flooding occurs each year with runoff from the mountains but is seldom cause for worry.

The natural flora and fauna of the region include kudzu, tomatoes, potatoes, maize, plains grasses, deer, alligators, armadillos, prairie dogs, turkeys, and eagles. Monstrous lifeforms of the baronies include many creatures from the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome. However, few lycanthropes exist on the Savage Coast, and intelligent creatures are limited primarily to goblinoids and those races mentioned as PC races.

A few especially horrible monsters are native to the Savage Coast; one such is the Inheritor lich, the undead remnant of an Inheritor who increases his or her power to great levels. Two of these creatures are currently found along the Savage Coast—one in Renardy, the other in the Savage Baronies. The Inheritor lich that inhabits the baronies is called Doomrider, a formidable enemy for any group of would-be heroes.

History of the Region

To understand the diverse forces that affect the current Savage Baronies, it is helpful to learn about the history of those cultures. Several civilizations have lived in the region now known as the Savage Baronies, and each has left a legacy of some kind—some through their descendants, some through their ruins and artifacts. In addition, the Red Curse has had a profound impact on the lands of the eastern Savage Coast. According to the calendar of the baronies, the current year is 1010, which is 1,010 years after the crowning of the emperor in the ancestral lands of the baronial humans.

Before the Baronies

Approximately 4,400 years ago, the first humans arrived in the area that would become known as the Savage Baronies. Driven by war from their eastern homeland, these people were the Oltecs, a coppery-skinned race who brought arts, agriculture, and basic metalworking to the region. At the

time of the Oltecs' arrival, few (if any) sentient beings inhabited the area, though a few tortles or manscorpions from the central coast may have lived nearby.

In any case, Oltecs quickly became dominant in the eastern portion of the Savage Coast and established settlements along the central coast as well. Oltecs never built cities, but they did have ceremonial centers that included step pyramids, giant stone heads, and statuary. They built edifices of earth and stone. The Oltecs' largest structures were of earth; little evidence remains of their locations, except for some oddly shaped hills in the baronies. A few stone pyramids still exist, but most disappeared as later natives took the stones for their own construction.

About 3,300 years ago, elves arrived in the region, migrating from the Serpent Peninsula, which lies on the eastern side of the Gulf of Hule. Like the Oltecs, elves settled the eastern and central coast. Elves did not affect the existing local culture in any significant way; they built settlements near human villages and traded with them, but they did not intermingle.

Elves and Oltecs held sway in the area for almost a millennium. While they occasionally fought each other and faced internal squabbles, they built extensive civilizations, creating what would eventually become ruins for later generations to explore.

The most direct cause of the transition from civilization to ruins was the arrival of a horde of goblinoids about 2,300 years ago. The elves and Oltecs were decimated by these goblinoids; though they had dealt with minor raids before, mounted goblinoid hordes represented the first truly organized external threat that either the elves or Oltecs had ever faced. Some elves and humans remained in the area, but both races fell into savagery.

About 17 centuries ago, another group of humans arrived in the region. These were the Nithians, sent to the Savage Coast by their pharaohs to explore and colonize. These dark-haired, dusky-skinned people settled along the eastern and central coast, expanding their proud empire over the region. Nithians captured what savage tribes they met, the remnants of the humans and elves who once dominated the area. Some savages were kept as slaves, and interbreeding was not unknown (though it was much more common between humans than between humans and elves). Along the central coast, Nithians came into conflict with manscorpions, driving all of them to the far west. Tortles were largely ignored, perhaps because they were still rare on the eastern coast.

Unfortunately for the Nithians, their culture was the target of the Immortal Thanatos's malicious manipulations. He maneuvered the people into conspiring against their pharaoh and irritating numerous Immortals. About 200 years after the Nithians' arrival, several Immortals banded together to destroy them. They were eradicated entirely, leaving behind only a few pyramids and artifacts in the area. The Immortals destroyed all memory of the Nithians as well. The cultural legacy of art and philosophy that humans, elves, and tortles of the region absorbed over their contact with the vanished race is now most often believed to be Oltec. Theories suggest that the ruins belonged to some other culture of the Savage Coast, such as wallaras (who never actually settled east of the Orc's Head Peninsula).

At the time of their destruction, the Nithians had just created a powerful magic in the region, laying the foundation for Legacies, *cinnabryl*, and *red steel*. About the same time as the eradication of the Nithians, conflicts on the Orc's Head Peninsula caused other Immortals to take an interest in the region and place curses upon the land and its peoples. These curses and the magic of the Nithians combined to produce the affliction known as the Red Curse. However, powerful mages in the far west were able to confine the effects of the Red Curse to those lands that would later become known as the Savage Baronies.

All those who remained in the region after the destruction of Nithian civilization suffered from the effects of the Red Curse. Many fled. Others discovered that the Red Curse did not exist everywhere and avoided the cursed areas. Those who stayed were joined by communities of dwarves who migrated to the region not long after the Red Curse began. As with the elves and humans, some dwarves fell; some left; and some adapted.

Over the next few centuries, little of note happened. In the east, tortles had a brief flirtation with civilization. About 1,150 years ago, tortles built a few settlements along the coast, initiating trade with some surrounding colonies.

Tortle civilization fell about 900 years ago when another horde of goblinoids swept down from the Yazak Steppes. Dwarves, elves, and humans were also hurt by this horde and were prompted to establish permanent, fortified settlements. None of these settlements were very large, but villages appeared throughout the eastern portion of the coast.

In approximately the year 450, another wave of human colonists arrived in the area; these were Traldar, descendants of Nithians and light-skinned Neathar, and thus lighter-skinned than those humans already living along the Savage Coast, who were mainly of Oltec ancestry. The Traldar formed several city-states on the eastern side of the Gulf of Hule; those settlers who traveled to the western side were mostly absorbed by the populations already living there(lightening the average westerner's skin tone).

Timeline

Following is a timeline of events pertinent to the development of the Savage Baronies. Most dates are approximate.

B.C. 3500 In the Atruaghin Plains far to the east, the Azcans break with the Oltecs, and the two groups war.

B.C. 3400 To avoid the ongoing war in their homeland, some Oltecs migrate to the Savage Coast, settling the eastern and central shores. Manscorpions and tortles already live along the central coast, and aranean and wallaran civilizations flourish on the western end.

B.C. 2300 Elves arrive in the region and settle the eastern and central Savage Coast. They live alongside, but not among, the Oltecs.

B.C. 2000 Elf and human mages settle in the forests of the western Savage Coast, supplanting the araneas; they name their land Herath. Enduks are created on the Orc's Head Peninsula and begin building the civilization of Nimmur.

B.C. 1700 Goblinoids settle in the Yazak Steppes.

B.C. 1300 Goblinoid hordes decimate elven and Oltec civilization. Those humans and elves who remain fall to a savage, semi-nomadic existence.

B.C. 700 Nithians arrive on the Savage Coast. They interbreed somewhat with Oltecs. Elves of the eastern coast establish settlements in and around what will eventually become Torreón and Narvaez.

B.C. 500 Herath wars with Wallara; manscorpions betray the enduks and take possession of Nimmur; Nithians disappear, leaving little evidence other than a few relics and pyramids. The Red Curse is created, but confined by Herathian mages to portions of the eastern Savage Coast.

B.C. 450 Dwarves arrive along the eastern coast and build small colonies.

B.C. 150 Tortle civilization rises on the central coast.

1 The first Emperor of Thyatis is crowned.

100 Goblinoid hordes sweep the coast again. Tortle civilization falls, and humans, dwarves, and elves remaining along the eastern coast are prompted to build permanent settlements.

450 Traldar arrive in the region. They establish several city-states on the eastern shores of the Gulf of Hule. Traldar who settle on the western shores and absorb the existing human cultures descended from the Oltecs. Humans of the eastern coast begin to establish permanent villages and intermingle with elves of the region.

500 Humans move into the areas that will eventually become Eusdria and Robrenn; some elves and dwarves ally with these humans. Lupins and rakastas form permanent settlements along the central Savage Coast in lands that will eventually become Renardy and Bellayne.

History of the Savage Baronies

Beginning around the year 900, another wave of colonization came to the Savage Coast. This brought many more humans to the region, primarily a large expedition from the Thyatian Empire far to the east. Sent by Emperor Gabrionus IV, the people who came to the Savage Coast were from a particular ethnic group among the Kerendan people of the Empire, the Ispans. Like other Kerendans, Ispans were olive-skinned, dark-haired, and fond of efficiency and fighting ability; unlike other Kerendans, Ispans also possessed a fair amount of wanderlust.

Ispans settled along the western shores of the Gulf of Hule. They founded villages, and from these, adventuring expeditions ventured inland. Some expeditions were lost, but several returned with great riches, gained from raiding ancient ruins, trading with gullible natives or robbing horrid monsters. Many adventurers founded villages of their own, claiming domains around them; most called themselves barons, equating themselves with landholding nobles from their faraway homelands.

No fewer than 20 petty baronies were founded in the first two decades after the Ispans came to the Savage Coast. In most cases, the baronies absorbed natives into their cultures, intermingling local blood and philosophies with the more Thyatian culture of the coastal villages. Other colonists also arrived and intermarried with both Ispans and natives; dark-skinned humans from Yavdlom settled in what would eventually become Vilaverde and Texeiras; and copper-skinned people from the faraway desert Emirates of Ylaruam settled in what would become Saragón. The Ispans eventually split into two peoples: those who called themselves Verdans, merging with the people of Yavdlom and forming the naval powers of Vilaverde and Texeiras; and those who styled themselves Espans, making up the other baronies. The Espans chose to differentiate their new culture from their old, colonial roots with a vowel shift from an initial "I" to initial "E"; the shift persists to this day.

The early baronies fought among themselves, and many fell. Others merged, either through conquest or through diplomacy. About 25 years ago, the baronies stabilized into the nine states currently known as the Savage Baronies. Though the modern baronies still squabble, each is sturdy enough to survive minor threats. More importantly, they usually have enough foresight to put aside their arguments and unite against major threats, but getting them to cooperate is no easy task.

A little over 40 years ago, a few states cooperated diplomatically to avoid a war; this resulted in

the Treaty of Tampicos. This famous treaty—initially signed by Torreón, Texeiras, Vilaverde, and Hule—defined mining rights in Terra Vermelha, the Red Lands. In addition, the Treaty of Tampicos covers claiming land and defining borders in general. Those who signed it (Hule and all baronies except Narvaez) are known as the Signatory States, and their representatives meet in informal councils to discuss disputes and other problems. While the decisions of this Signatory Council are not binding, member baronies usually obey such decisions to avoid conflict with the other baronies. Hule seldom sends delegates to conferences and often ignores any decisions except those contained in the original Treaty of Tampicos.

The Coming of the Curse

A century ago, the Red Curse was confined to scattered areas of the eastern end of the Savage Coast. Twisted monsters occasionally came scrabbling or oozing out of the cursed areas, but few humanoids fell to the Red Curse because they had learned to avoid the lands under the curse. Ispan colonists also discovered the Red Curse, but unlike earlier inhabitants, these colonists neither succumbed to nor avoided the Red Curse. Instead, they fought and studied it, eventually finding ways to protect themselves from it.

A few people even settled in the cursed lands. While some died, others reportedly changed, acquiring magical Legacies and twisting deformities. These individuals were studied by scholars, mages, and priests in the nascent baronies; ways were found to slow the progress of the curse, first through spells and then with *cinnabryl*.

About a decade ago, in response to an invasion from Hule, Los Guardianos began experimenting with *cinnabryl* and power gain, and the first vials of *crimson essence* were produced. The affliction, previously called just "the curse," became known generally as the Red Curse as its effects became more widely known and more people began experimenting with its power. None knew why its effects were confined only to certain regions.

Baronials were aware of the nation of mages, Herath, at the western end of the Savage Coast, but they paid little attention to it. None realized it was the mages of Herath who confined the Red Curse to its limited areas of effect. Then, about one year ago, disaster struck: magic worldwide suddenly failed completely for several days. During this time, the capital of Herath was sacked by goblinoids, and the magical protections were destroyed. By the time magic was restored, the Red Curse had spread, covering almost the entire coastal region. People of the region know the Red Curse spread greatly during the troubles, but except for the Herathians, none know why. Most attribute it to the wrath of the Immortals, to which they also attribute the multitude of wars that have occurred over the last decade.

For the most part, the people of the Savage Baronies have learned to deal with the Red Curse. They have studied it and developed ways to protect themselves—though not all can afford to obtain *cinnabryl*. Inheritors, *red steel*, and *cinnabryl* have all become more common since the spread of the Red Curse, particularly in the Savage Baronies. Commerce has increased in the baronies, and class stratification has become even more pronounced.

Timeline of the Savage Baronies

Dates are precise in this timeline.

900 A new wave of colonists reaches the eastern Savage Coast, including people from Ylaruam, Yavdlom, and the Thyatian Empire. They bring feudalism and class structure. Adventurers establish domains that eventually develop into the Savage Baronies and absorb the elven, dwarven, and human cultures already in the region. Settlers discover the Red Curse but decide to stay anyway. A few halflings also begin to arrive on the Savage Coast and are absorbed into local cultures.

902 The Barony of Narvaez is founded along the coast by an expedition of Ispan people from the distant Thyatian Empire. Narvaez claims a great deal of land, from the Claw Peninsula to the Bay of the Siren (Baia da Sereia), including land already occupied by human, elven, dwarven, and tortle inhabitants.

903 The Dominion of Vilaverde is founded by Ispans and people from Yavdlom.

905 Nueva Esperanza (New Hope) declares independence from Narvaez.

906 Dwarves and elves in lands claimed by Narvaez declare themselves the Barony of Montoya.

908 The State of Copetez is founded in the plains.

909 The Barony of Montejo is founded inland from Narvaez; the Dominion of Tanaka is founded by people from Yavdlom.

913 The Barony of Narvaez splits between two heirs; the northern section remains Narvaez, and the southern portion becomes the Barony of Sotto.

915 The State of Aranjuez is founded in the plains near Montejo.

916 The Barony of Cristobal is founded several miles north of Narvaez.

921 The inland State of Escudor breaks from Sotto.

926 The Barony of Rivera is founded within Sotto, causing a small civil war; Rivera achieves

independence.

929 The State of Texeiras is founded along the eastern part of the Bay of the Siren.

930 The Barony of Marino declares independence from Narvaez, claiming the western shores of the Bay of the Siren.

931 A *cinnabryl* mine is discovered near Nueva Esperanza. Sages discover its protective value when used against those affected by the Red Curse, but others discover that it harms those unaffected by the curse. *Cinnabryl* is known, but not generally coveted. At this time, depleted *cinnabryl* is discarded after use.

934 The Barony of Gargoña is founded in western Sotto; after a short civil war, Gargoña is granted independence.

935 The Barony of Quimeras declares independence from Narvaez.

936 Sotto declares war on Gargoña; after a few months, Gargoña conquers Sotto and absorbs all but the southern portion, which organizes into the State of Almarrón. The official name of the culture of all baronies except Vilaverde and Texeiras is changed from Ispan to Espan; the language spoken is Espa.

937 Narvaez attacks Quimeras and Montoya, re-absorbing both after a short war.

939 To encourage internal consolidation, Almarrón strikes south and takes over Nueva Esperanza and surrounding territories.

940 The Barony of Alcazar is founded near Cristobal.

941 The Barony of Torreón is founded south of Cristobal and Alcazar.

942 A human smith in Torreón experiments with depleted *cinnabryl*; she discovers its usefulness and names the substance *red steel*. A few small weapons of *red steel* are produced.

947 The State of Bigotillos is founded north of Copetez.

948 Dwarves near Nueva Esperanza begin experimenting with *steel seed* found in the local *cinnabryl* mine. When they accidentally mix it with *vermeil*, they stumble upon the formula for *smokepowder*. They begin searching for ways to use the new substance.

951 The Barony of Babosas is founded east of Vilaverde.

957 The first arquebus is constructed in Nueva Esperanza; a function for *smokepowder* has been found, but it is rarely used because of the dangers.

958 Texeiras conquers the Barony of Marino.

962 The Barony of Los Elegidos is founded north of Torreón, Alcazar, and Cristobal.

963 Yazi gnolls attack Saragón and Aranjuez.

966 Montejo and Aranjuez unite diplomatically to form the Barony of Saragón.

967 The Barony of Morales is founded just north of Torreón, between Cristobal and Alcazar.

968 Torreón wars on its neighbors, conquering and absorbing Morales and Alcazar; Cristobal and Elegidos are weakened but do not fall. Elite Torreóner warriors use swords of *red steel*, the first recorded instance of its use in a large battle.

969 Torreón discovers deposits of *cinnabryl* in Terra Vermelha, and moves to take over those lands; to forestall a possible war over mining rights, diplomats gather and form the Treaty of Tampicos, which is signed by Torreón, Vilaverde, Texeiras, and Hule.

970 Elegidos disappears without a trace.

971 Babosas is conquered and absorbed by Hule.

975 The wheellock is developed in Nueva Esperanza. Certain leaders, including a warrior named Cimmaron, encourage the secret production of the weapon.

977 Almarrón conquers and absorbs Escudor, then turns north and initiates hostilities with Gargoña and Rivera.

978 To help defend itself from Almarrón, Rivera agrees to be absorbed into Gargoña. While Almarrón is distracted, Nueva Esperanza begins hostilities; Cimmaron's pistoleers make quite an impression.

979 The revolution in Nueva Esperanza continues, led by General Cimmaron. Almarrón and Gargoña end hostilities, and both ratify the Treaty of Tampicos.

980 Armed with a wheellock pistol and a *red steel* sword, General Cimmaron leads his forces to victory over troops from Almarrón at the Battle of Hondo; his followers declare him Earl Cimmaron, and Nueva Esperanza becomes the center of the newly independent Cimmaron County. Dissatisfied with recent leadership, the people of Almarrón revolt against their leader and overthrow him. Making use of old Traladaran philosophies, they establish a democracy.

981 Cristobal relinquishes claims on its holdings, except for one tower and a few square miles of land; the Lord of Torre Cristobal gives up the title "Barón" but maintains independence from other powers.

984 Saragón ratifies the Treaty of Tampicos.

985 Copetez and Bigotillos unite through marriage; the lands are merged to form the State of Guadalante. Guadalante ratifies the Treaty of Tampicos.

986 Doña Esperanza comes to power in Gargoña and leads her state into peace, beginning a policy of neutrality regarding all the other baronies.

990 Cimmaron ratifies the Treaty of Tampicos.

992 The Treaty of Cortesillas, between Guadalante and Saragón, solves the question of watering rights for cattle between the two nations.

994 Almarrón faces a time of troubles. An opportunist seizes control of the state and declares himself dictator of the nation.

997 *Cinnabryl* is discovered in Slagovich; it is mined and traded to Torreón, Texeiras, and Cimmaron for *red steel*.

999 The first vial of *crimson essence* is produced by an alchemist in Saragón. The secret spreads to a group of adventurers who become the first Inheritors. Some of the Inheritors rise to power in both the Brotherhood of Order and the Friends of Freedom. To balance them, other Inheritors join the Neutral Alliance.

1000 The Immortals begin a conflict that eventually begins to affect mortals throughout the world.

1001 The Inheritors face internal conflicts and reorganize the aligned societies (the Brotherhood of Order, the Neutral Alliance, and the Friends of Freedom) into the three Orders of the Inheritors (the Order of the Ruby, the Order of Crimson, and the Order of the Flame).

1005 Prompted by attacks from Bellayne, the goblinoids of the Yazak Steppes begin unifying. Robrenn attacks and irritates the Yazi goblinoids.

1005 An internal holy war begins in Narvaez. The church of Narvaez unifies the factions by providing an external enemy: the other Savage Baronies. Narvaez carries its Inquisition to the other baronies.

1006 Torreón, Vilaverde, and Texeiras ally with Narvaez, rather than fight that state. The other five baronies (Guadalante, Cimmaron, Almarrón, Saragón, and Gargoña) ally to fight against the Narvaez alliance. Gauchos and Swashbuckler "freedom fighters" prove effective against the naval power and mercenaries of the Narvaez alliance.

1006 Hule attacks the Savage Baronies. The baronies end their conflict to unite against Hule.

1007 Yazi gnolls attack the baronies, which have been severely weakened by previous conflicts. The Master of Hule sets a curse on his enemies, inflicting floods and other natural disasters on the Savage Baronies.

1008 The Savage Baronies again enter into border conflicts. Tortles and other peasants revolt. In Almarrón, rebels oust their dictator and install a Barón descended from their former noble rulers. The Colonial Revolt begins, and many colonies rebel against their parent states. Yazak goblinoids attack throughout the Savage Coast.

1009 Magic stops working, and Yazak goblinoids sack the distant capital of Herath. Though magic is restored a few days later, the Red Curse has spread across the coast. Inheritors of the baronies begin introducing *cinnabryl* throughout the coast, while taking control of most of the *cinnabryl* mines as well.

1010 The present.

Possibility of Unification

More than a few people have suggested that the problems of the Savage Baronies could be solved if they became united under one ruler. While this idea is attractive to many Baronials, including a majority of the barons, no head of state is willing to give up power.

For now, the closest thing to a unified government in the baronies is the informal Treaty of Tampicos council, the Signatory Council. In practice, this group has no real authority to make or enforce laws and serves merely as a forum for airing arguments that could affect all the baronies if not curbed.

Each of the nine Signatory States (Hule and each of the baronies except Narvaez) is allowed to send one delegate to the council, along with whatever assistants the delegate feels he needs. The leader of the Signatory Council is selected each time the council meets from those delegates who attend. Typically, the selected leader is someone with experience and no vested interest in the dispute at hand.

The council leader is seldom a man or woman of great charisma. It is possible that were a charismatic leader to arise on the council, he would be elected to serve many times and actually begin to carry some authority. However, the charismatic individuals of the baronies (many of whom are Swashbucklers and Inheritors) seldom have an interest in council meetings. Thus, the council is an unlikely source to provide unification for the baronies.

Another potential road to unification is warfare. For decades, rulers in the Savage Baronies have considered extending their rule to adjoining areas. Several have even been successful; compare the number of states that once existed to those that exist now. However, the current group of baronies has lasted for a quarter of a century, and none seem to be in danger of falling. While border wars and other difficulties occur with regularity, if such conflicts were to escalate to the point of complete conquest, chances are that other baronies would involve themselves either as mediators or

reinforcements to prevent any one state from becoming too powerful.

In addition, each of the current baronies has attained a unique cultural identity. Vilaverde is a sea power, Narvaez holds many religious fanatics, and Guadalante is home to free spirited gauchos. Trying to bring these diverse cultures together to agree about national policy is a task for Immortals. Los Guardianos tend to be fiercely independent and patriotic, and their leaders reflect those attitudes.

Another possible way to unify the baronies is through marriage. Since all of the states pass on national leadership through inheritance (except possibly Cimmaron, where the policy is under question), if heirs to two baronies were to marry, their child might inherit both baronies. Baronesa Esperanza of Gargoña has managed to marry two of her children into other ruling families, one in Narvaez and one in Saragón; while these marriages have helped her keep the peace, they have not yet provided heirs capable of ruling both states. Their are serious problems with this form of unification: the prospect is risky because someone two generations down the line might not be a capable leader for a larger nation; supporters of independence might assassinate potential heirs; there are few heirs in the baronies, and fewer of marriageable age; and the delicate diplomacy required to arrange such a marriage is difficult for the people of the baronies to master.

Should events fall into place, some baronies might be able to cooperate and conceivably unite. Vilaverde and Texeiras are not so different; Cimmaron and Guadalante are similar; and the three "enlightened states" of Almarrón, Gargoña, and Saragón have much in common. Any of these three groupings could conceivably unify into a larger nation under the right circumstances.

In conclusion, while total unification is a possibility, it is an unlikely one. If a charismatic and powerful leader were to arise among the baronies, perhaps he could unite two or more of the lands; if heirs married, some pairs of states might unify. However, the independence and cultural diversity of the people would likely prevent most unions from lasting for very long.

Vilaverde and Texeiras

The easternmost baronies of Vilaverde and Texeiras maintain strong navies. These are lands of seafarers, adventuresome souls who travel the length of the Savage Coast and visit other lands. The people of these lands tend to ignore the Red Curse, yet are just the types of people with enough daring and wanderlust to perhaps complete a quest to end it, could they be so motivated.

—*The Chronicle of the Curse*
by Don Luis de Manzanas

Sometimes called the Sea Powers, Vilaverde and Texeiras are the strongest naval powers on the entire Savage Coast. These rivals, with their strong seafaring presence, virtually control the western half of the Gulf of Hule. The two states often clash with the aggressive City-States, especially Hojah, Slagovich, and Zvornik.

Like the humans of the other baronies, those in the Sea Powers are primarily Ispan descent, mingled with Oltec, Nithian, and Traladaran blood. In addition, the people of the Sea Powers have intermarried for decades with settlers from Yavdlom—tall, ebony-skinned humans with traces of elven blood.

Though the peaceful aspects of Yavdlom culture have done little to cool the hot blood of Guardianos with whom they have intermarried, the present culture of the Sea Powers does revere seers and prophets. Diviners are popular among the seafarers of Vilaverde and Texeiras for their usefulness in predicting the weather on seafaring journeys. Verdans make many long ocean voyages, and their ships have traveled from the Gulf of Hule to the far side of the Orc's Head Peninsula and beyond.

The Sea Powers, besides having an effective, ocean-based fighting force, also boast skilled merchants; they carry goods to many places along the Savage Coast. Despite some jealousy over the Sea Powers' control of Savage Coast shipping, the other nations of the coast value the transportation, communication, and commerce provided by their ships.

In addition, Vilaverde and Texeiras are known for the colonies they have started in various places along the coast. Vilaverde's colonies include Terra Leãoça, O Bastião das Tartarugas, and the recently independent colony of Porto Escorpião. Texeiras maintains the successful colonies of Protectorado da Presa and the Colony of the Horn.

Based roughly on Portugal of the 1500s and 1600s, the Sea Powers are home to explorers, swashbucklers, merchants, and pirates. The people of Vilaverde and Texeiras are a proud folk who form a distinctive political unit among the Savage Baronies; when they ally, none can stand against them at sea. Because few Savage Coast nations are without ports, the threat of naval retaliation is enough to keep other nations from molesting the land holdings of Vilaverde and Texeiras. Both countries prefer the title "Barão" for their lords.

Dominio de Vilaverde

Vilaverde is home to high-spirited people who travel widely across the Savage Coast. Among other nations, Vilaverde is known as a haven for pirates and outlaws, a lawless realm that cares little for civilized society. While this reputation has elements of truth, the dominion is not quite as lawless as it is painted. Its independent people are fiercely patriotic, willing to unify to defend Vilaverde from any difficulty.

Vilaverde's biggest challenge is the defense of its eastern border, the only place Hule has direct contact with the baronies. Along with Terra Vermelha and the eastern reaches of the Yazak Steppes, Vilaverde might seem a flimsy obstacle to Hule's expansion into baronial territories. However, the Vilaverdan fleet is an effective deterrent to Hule's aggression because it could easily destroy Hule's navy and all its coastal assets. Four years ago, Huleans met and defeated a hastily assembled Vilaverdan force at the Battle of Burdür, but before Hule could take advantage of the victory, Vilaverde destroyed most of Hule's shipping ability in two battles in the inlet near Karakoy and sacked several settlements. Rather than risk its other coastal properties, which it had believed well-defended, Hule withdrew from Vilaverde.

The Nation

Vilaverde's landscape is dominated by grasslands, broken by cultivated farmlands, ragged forests, and a few hills. The nation is geographically divided down the center; a few miles inland from the coast, the land sweeps upward to a plateau several hundred feet above sea level. This slope, known as O Grande Escarpamento, is miles long, stretching the length of the barony. The cliff is broken in many places by gentle slopes leading down to the coastal lowlands; these breaks allow ready travel

from lowlands to highlands in every sector of Vilaverde.

Vilaverde has existed for more than a century. Its borders have been relatively constant during that time with occasional minor setbacks and conquests. Vilaverde has never absorbed or conquered another state, nor has another state ever owned, absorbed, or broken away from Vilaverde.

The People

Vilaverdans are known as explorers, adventurers, thieves, pirates, and whalers. The typical citizen encountered in Vilaverde is a Swashbuckler fighter, though Nobles and Local Heroes are relatively common as well. Spellcasters are uncommon, and most mages of Vilaverde are Swashbucklers who prefer a flashy style of magic. Feared on all seas, Vilaverdans are a light-hearted, high-spirited people whom others regard as highly audacious.

The Yavdlom background of the Vilaverdans gives them great respect for divination. Since most of their divination is used at sea, the effects of the Red Curse do not muddle the results as much. Fortune tellers are common in the settlements and are usually consulted before important ventures. Vilaverdans believe in fate and luck and enjoy testing both with games of chance.

The Red Curse

Vilaverdans view the Red Curse simply as a hazard of life, one that causes pain for the "other guy." They seldom think about the Red Curse because life is too short to spend worrying about that which Fate has already planned; whatever happens, happens. Inhabitants of Vilaverde mostly ignore Afflicted because their visages are unpleasant and depressing. In response, Afflicted band together to form their own communities where they blithely ignore the various deformations of their neighbors, acting as if everything is perfectly normal.

Industry and Trade

Vilaverde brings in money through whaling, shipping, and raiding. The people of Vilaverde are skilled whalers, and the seas off their coast have an abundant supply of whales. The Vilaverdan fleet also trades all along the Savage Coast, carrying goods from port to port. Vilaverde controls most sea trade with Herath and Bellayne and has a monopoly on trade goods out of Nimmur, the far-western homeland of the manscorpions. Its other customers include some ports in Renardy and Robrenn.

To protect and expand their commerce, Vilaverdans explore constantly. They have built numerous settlements and outposts along the coast, including three fairly large and successful colonies (Terra Leãoça, O Bastião das Tartarugas, and Porto Escorpião). Most of Vilaverde's holdings are no more than small forts or fortified villages used for commerce and navigation. Vilaverde once established a small colony on the Arm of the Immortals, Porto Maldição.

Vilaverde controls the only two large *cinnabryl* mines so far discovered in Terra Vermelha. They use most of the *cinnabryl* internally, reducing the number of Afflicted in Vilaverde, but they export significant amounts, primarily to the other baronies and Eusdria. Vilaverde also conducts heavy trade in the *red steel* gained from use of *cinnabryl*.

Religion

While not overly religious, the Vilaverdans do venerate the Immortals, especially Milan, Valerias, and Faña. The Ambassador is favored over the General; the Judge receives little reverence because leading an honorable life is not an overriding concern to most Vilaverdans.

The Ruler

Vilaverde is ruled by Barão Jorge "O Temerário" de Vilaverde. Baron Jorge "The Intrepid" is a charismatic human fighter with the Swashbuckler kit. At 55 years old, he shows little sign of age. Proud, quick, and fit, he still holds his own in a sword duel. While a dynamic and dashing individual, Baron Jorge is also a profound thinker who cares deeply about his nation and the welfare of his people. He is ruthless in protecting Vilaverde.

Baron Jorge's rule is supported by an oligarchy of wealthy sea captains, many of whom achieved wealth through piracy. These captains and their families are the land's ruling class, the nobility of Vilaverde. A Captains' Council, made up of representatives of the ruling families, serves as an advisory board to Baron Jorge; the Captains' Council also admits new members of nobility based on activities, wealth, attitude, and bribes. While it is said that any native can rise to the nobility in Vilaverde, few are actually admitted by the council.Despite bribes and corruption, the council does take pains to insure that those chosen have some semblance of noble bearing, knowledge of etiquette, and grasp of politics. Currently, 22 families are considered nobility; each holds a seat on the Captains' Council. The council is growing slowly, with a new seat added once every two or three years. Still, occasionally a family is destroyed or disgraced and removed from the council.

The Captains' Council meets once a month to conduct its own business and offer advice to Baron Jorge. While the baron is not obligated to act on this advice, he always considers council recommendations closely because he knows the Captains' Council represents the most powerful

families in Vilaverde.

Technically, all of Vilaverde and its colonial holdings are the property of Baron Jorge. However, he grants indefinite leases to noble families. The nobles mediate over local disputes and act as custodians of their (leased) estates. In return for the use of the land, they are obligated to provide ships and warriors for the protection and enrichment of Vilaverde.

Baron Jorge has two heirs. His eldest son is Dom Jorge, ruler of Porto Escorpião, a colony which Baron Jorge recently granted independence. The baron's second son is Dom Fernando, who represents the baron's family on the Captains' Council. Since Porto Escorpião was granted independence, some speculation exists as to who will inherit Vilaverde when Barón Jorge dies. The baron has not yet stated his preference.

The Capital

Porto Preto, a town with 9,800 permanent residents, serves as the capital of Vilaverde. A notorious pirate haven, Porto Preto is also the home port of a large fleet of armed merchant ships. It is heavily defended, as are all other towns in this region.

The majority of the residents of Porto Preto are human, though a few established families of demihumans and lupins also live here. However, Porto Preto hosts many visitors of widely varied races. Most townspeople are merchants and laborers, including a large number of innkeepers, tavern owners, and dock workers—all those whose livelihood involves keeping a navy afloat and reasonably happy. Farms surround the town, and their produce decorates Porto Preto's open markets regularly. Some foodstuffs are sold in town, and a small percentage is exported to other nations.

Porto Preto is an exciting town with a spirited nightlife. Intrigue lurks in alleys, rogues are common, and duels occur several times a day. More than a little dangerous for the unprepared, a new experience awaits around every corner in Porto Preto.

Other Places of Interest

Tiny hamlets with fortified keeps dot the Domain of Vilaverde. While most are too small to appear on the map (and are left for the DM to design as desired), the larger and more important places are briefly discussed in the following text.

The village of Cafundo is the only other major settlement in Vilaverde. A quiet, busy place, it is a farming and fishing village with a population of a few hundred humans.

Torre do Perdão, the "tower of the lost one," sits at the edge of O Grande Escarpamento, where a major break in the cliff has allowed a road to be built from Porto Preto to the mines in Terra Vermelha. Once a major stopover on this important trade route, the tower was sacked in the recent wars. Formerly garrisoned with soldiers, Torre do Perdão now stands empty, waiting for someone to clear out whatever bandits and monsters have moved in, and enable Baron Jorge to devote resources to rebuilding it.

A few miles off Porto Preto's waterfront lies the site of a major naval battle some 30 years ago. The conflict was between Texeiras and Vilaverde. More than 40 sunken ships rest here and in the surrounding waters. While some have been ransacked, others lie at the bottom of the sea with untouched treasures and hidden dangers.

O Bastião das Tartarugas (Bastion of the Turtles)

On the coast southeast of Robrenn, this small Vilaverdan colony claims several square miles of beaches and cliffs. It is named for the only settlement, a foreboding castle perched high on the windswept cliffs. The castle is home to several dozen humans and is staffed by a like number of tortle peasants. A complicated system of winches and pulleys allows provisions to be hauled up the cliff with relative ease; from the castle, goods are sent on to settlements in Robrenn.

Terra Leãoça

This Vilaverdan colony sits on the western Savage Coast and borders Bellayne and Herath. Established to control naval access to the city of Theeds in Bellayne, Terra Leãoça enforces Vilaverde's quasi-monopoly on sea trade in the region. Bellayne's ships are allowed passage to the trade routes, but they pay dearly for the privilege.

Vilaverde maintains a strong military presence at Rocha dos Gatos (the "Rock of the Cats"), a large fortress and a port in Terra Leãoça that garrisons Torreóner swordsmen and rakasta outcasts. The colony also operates a sulfur mine and a lighthouse. It encompasses the ruins of Espora-Verde and two villages, Três Corações and Postera (both centers for commerce with Herath). Espora-Verde was a tower sacked by goblinoids in the recent wars. It has not yet been rebuilt.

Terra Leãoça receives quiet support from the Great Magus of Herath because it is costly to Bellayne, keeping that nation from threatening Herath. In return for the support, the Vilaverdans allow Herathian merchant ships to sail through the colony's territorial waters without interference.

Porto Escorpião
This small state, on the western coast of the Orc's Head Peninsula, consists of little more than a castle and a lighthouse. Established as a Vilaverdan trading post, it was granted independence about two years ago, when Vilaverde recalled troops and relinquished official control of the colony.

Dom Jorge de Vilaverde, son of Baron Jorge, runs Porto Escorpião. In an effort to cut costs and to bring veteran soldiers back to Vilaverde in times of trouble, Baron Jorge gave his son complete control over the holding; several troops remained loyal to Dom Jorge and stayed in Porto Escorpião. While Dom Jorge appreciates the political necessity of the decision, he understandably feels abandoned and wonders whether he continues to be heir to all his father's holdings or if Vilaverde will be inherited by his brother, Dom Fernando. While Vilaverde and Porto Escorpião maintain trade and cordial relations, the relationship between father and son has become strained. So far, Dom Jorge has remained loyal, but he is impatient for an answer regarding his status.

Porto Maldição
This former colony consists of the village of Mato Grande and a fortress with the same name as the colony. The small holding on the Arm of the Immortals declared independence when Porto Escorpião was released. Since Porto Maldição is small, far away, and of little importance, Vilaverde released it without a second thought.

Estado de Texeiras

Like Vilaverde, Texeiras is home to a well-traveled, high-spirited folk. Though also viewed by most Baronials as a home for pirates, Texeiras is recognized as having legitimate merchants. While Vilaverde takes what it wants, Texeiras earns its possessions and trade in most people's minds. Ironically, Texeirans are less often considered thieves by outsiders simply because they are more subtle about their practices.

The people of Texeiras are a little less boisterous than those of Vilaverde but are just as independent and proud. In fact, Texeirans are even more patriotic than Vilaverdans, to the point that they hear insults in even the mildest of criticisms.

The Nation

Most of Texeiras is forested, though the state includes grasslands and abundant farmland as well. Forests are carefully protected because they provide the wood for Texeiran ships. Texeiras also claims a small portion of O Grande Escarpamento, the grasslands that border Terra Vermelha. Situated around the Baia da Sereia, Texeiras is shielded from the worst of the weather in the region.

Texeiras was founded 80 years ago along the eastern edge of Baia da Sereia. Almost 30 years later, it absorbed the Yavdlom colony of Tanaka, which had occupied Cabo dos Cões, now the eastern end of Texeiras. In the same campaign of conquest, Texeiras took over the barony of Marino, which had recently broken from Narvaez to claim the western shores of Baia da Sereia. Narvaez has threatened once or twice to take back the Marino lands but has never matched the naval supremacy of Texeiras. At the moment, Texeiras is on reasonably good terms with Narvaez.

The People
Texeirans, like Vilaverdans, are known as explorers, adventurers, whalers, and privateers. The typical person encountered in Texeiras is more likely a thief than a warrior, usually a charismatic Swashbuckler with expensive tastes and a suave demeanor; the Local Hero, Noble, and Honorbound are also common kits. While warriors and wizards are common in Texeiras, rogues are much more common here than elsewhere in the baronies. Citizens of Texeiras are subtle enough about their thievery that people generally believe them to be an honest, hard-working folk.

The more worldly people of the Savage Coast have learned to be cautious in what they say about a Texeiran, Texeiras, or any product of that state. Texeirans have even been known to suggest duels if someone offers a low price for their goods. Texeirans are a proud lot who try to avenge any insult against them—real or imagined.

The Red Curse
Like Vilaverdans, Texeirans seldom think about the Red Curse. Life is too short to dwell on something so depressing. Texeiras boasts a thriving trade in *cinnabryl*, so Afflicted are relatively uncommon. Texeiran enclaves of Afflicted tend to stay rather cheerful and are well-maintained, like those in Vilaverde; deformations are largely ignored by the inhabitants of the enclaves.

Industry and Trade
The main Texeiran exports are wood and *cinnabryl*. Most timber exports go to Vilaverde and Renardy. Texeiras knows that Narvaez wants to build a fleet to rival its own, so it usually find excuses to not

sell wood to Narvaez. *Cinnabryl* is imported as well as exported; most supplies coming from Slagovich, small deposits in Terra Vermelha, and trade with Vilaverde (usually in return for wood). Narvaez relies on Texeiras for most of its *cinnabryl*. Texeiras also trades in *red steel*, especially in return for *cinnabryl* from Slagovich.

Texeiras has a strong merchant fleet to protect its trade routes and has established numerous outposts along the Savage Coast. These include two important colonies: Protectorado da Presa (near Renardy and Eusdria) and the Colony of the Horn (on the Orc's Head Peninsula). Texeiran crews consist mostly of swashbuckling rogues and are supplemented by Torreóner mercenaries who serve as marines.

The Texeiran fleets carry out much of the commerce along the Savage Coast. They transport trade goods to all the nations of the coast; Eusdria in particular is a consistent trading partner. It is usually Texeiras that trades with the City-States and Robrenn.

Religion

Like the Vilaverdans, Texeirans are not overly religious. They revere Milan, Valerias, and Faña; they also hold the Ambassador in high esteem but see the Judge and the General as less important. The Texeiran veneration of Faña provides common ground with the people of Narvaez, who know her as the Inquisitor.

The Ruler

The ruler of Texeiras is Barão Bartolomeu "O Calvo" de Texeiras. Baron "Bart the Bald" is a retired adventurer, a human Swashbuckler thief now in his early 60s. The baron's wife died some years ago, leaving him without an heir. Much speculation exists as to whom he will name to take his place; the front-runner seems to be Dominíca da Solidão (see Protectorado da Presa later in this chapter), but many believe Baron Bart will choose some unknown who impresses him with daring and honor. More than a few adventurers have tried to gain his attention and praise with their activities.

Texeiras functions on a strict hierarchy. The baron claims the top position; the governors he has appointed to different regions (internal and external) are the next level and are considered nobility. Because Baron Bart is a shrewd judge of character, the majority of Texeiran nobles deserve their titles. The people of Texeiras consider him an extremely competent leader.

The overall structure of the government resembles a thieves' guild, and the baron has numerous spies, assassins, and other agents in his service. These help Baron Bart keep track of his holdings, followers, and international events. They also allow him to manipulate others for the good of Texeiras.

Baron Bart sits in a difficult position because he must maintain his borders against many powerful neighbors. All of them covet his rich capital, fleets, and colonial holdings. The barony's overall population and land forces remain rather light in comparison with its neighbors. So far, diplomacy, bribery, and skillful use of political manipulation—or assassinations—maintain the status quo.

The Capital

Boa Mansão, with its population of 8,700, is by far the largest settlement in Texeiras. Besides being the center of government, it is also the center of commerce and culture. Most merchandise brought through the region, including loads of *cinnabryl*, passes through this town. Far less rowdy than its Vilaverdan counterpart, Boa Mansão is a town with museums and theaters in addition to its inns, taverns, and shipping businesses.

The citizens of the capital are mostly human, though a few representatives of each of the humanoid races along the Savage Coast have taken up residency here. As in Porto Preto, while most inhabitants are merchants and laborers, a large number of artists and crafters reside here as well.

Boa Mansão is a reasonably quiet place. Since commerce is so important to the nation, and the capital is the center of that commerce, outright thievery is frowned upon within the town. Most Texeirans know better than to rob someone in the capital, and many thieves in the town actually try to prevent miscellaneous robberies and muggings. If a robbery does occur in Boa Mansão, the town's extensive thieves' guild can usually find the perpetrators and return stolen possessions to their owners, giving the town a reputation as safe. This allows Texeirans to work on much more subtle and elaborate schemes than simple robbery.

Other Places of Interest

Besides the capital, Texeiras has only one major settlement, the village of Velha Navalha on Cabo dos Cões. Primarily a fishing village, Velha Navalha also boasts a small garrison of Torreóner mercenaries and a few ships. In case of an attack, these military forces have orders to merely delay any attackers while a message is sent to the capital for reinforcements.

Until recently, two other important villages (Porto Punhaland Vila Franca) prospered in Texeiras, but both villages were ransacked during the recent wars. They have not yet been rebuilt, though a few Afflicted have moved to Vila Franca and are trying to gain a charter for government from Baron

Bart.

Off the coast near Vila Franca lies the site of a naval battle, fought just over 50 years ago between Texeiras and Marino. Marino's hopes of independence ended here. Most sunken ships in the area have been thoroughly searched, but a few might still hold treasures.

Protectorado da Presa

This domain consists of two large islands (Ilhas Gémeas, the Twin Islands) and a fair part of Cabo das Baleias (the Cape of Whales), located south of Renardy and sharing a border with Eusdria. During the recent wars, the Protectorado da Presa declared independence from Texeiras. The situation escalated into a small civil war, and the colony's major settlements were destroyed. To end hostilities, the colony was granted near autonomy but is still considered the property of Texeiras.

The main settlements in the region are the imposing fortress Praça Forte de Texeiras and the well-defended Torre Cruzada. Both villages (Solidão and Poracá) and the town (Porto do Sul) remain in ruins. Because Protectorado da Presa's shores are now short on land-based protection, ships patrol the region constantly, periodically relieving crews at the colony's important lighthouses. Permanent settlements are beginning to develop around the two mining camps on the cape. One mine produces opals, the other silver; these important Texeiran assets are well guarded.

The leader of Protectorado da Presa, the lord of Praça Forte de Texeiras, is actually a lady, Dominíca da Solidão. A charismatic Honorbound fighter, she led the rebellion against Texeiras but has enough supporters in Boa Mansão that Baron Bart felt it would be unwise to remove her. The two leaders came an to agreement about the colony's status that seems to satisfy both parties. Some Texeirans speculate that in return for Dominíca allowing the colony to remain part of Texeiras, the baron has named her heir to Texeiras. However, neither leader has verified any such agreement.

The Colony of the Horn

Located on the upper western tip of the Orc's Head Peninsula, the Colony of the Horn consists of a village, a fort, and several square miles of relatively barren land. The tip of the Horn is also known as Cabo do Macaco, the Cape of the Monkey. The land here varies from grassland to sand dunes but also boasts some rich plantations.

Fortaleza da Boa Vista is a small fortress with a substantial military force composed of about 200 Torreóner mercenaries, a like number of Texeiran ground troops, and about a dozen ships. The fort allows Texeiras to maintain a strong presence on the Orc's Head Peninsula, which is rumored to have many untapped resources and ancient treasure hoards.

Well within the borders of the Haze, the small village of Bom Jardim (home to about 250 people) has become known as a haven for those avoiding the Red Curse. Those who recover from Affliction can go there to recuperate if they can afford passage. On occasion, adventurers retire in the village,where they no longer have to worry about obtaining *cinnabryl*. Though Bom Jardim is a quiet place, it is jealously guarded by its residents, perhaps half of whom have an adventuring background and are more than able to defend themselves.

Probably the most famous part-time resident of Bom Jardim is Killian, a privateer who ranges up and down the coast, never spending more than a few days at a time in the cursed lands. Killian's ship, the *Selwynn*, is named for a lost love, a golden-eyed elven woman of gentle manner and surpassing beauty. With his swashbuckling crew and his Texeiran letter of marque, Killian raids ships all along the Savage Coast. He is especially fond of attacking ships from Narvaez to remind the state how pitiful its naval forces are.

Terra Vermelha

Also called the Red Lands, this area consists of badlands, rocky hills, scrub plains, and other inhospitable terrain, including an active volcano, Serra Sanguinea (the Bleeding Mountain). Despite the unattractive nature of its landscape, Terra Vermelha is the object of fierce competition. Claimed by both Vilaverde and Texeiras, the land holds many small, scattered deposits of *cinnabryl*. Although few deposits last long enough to provide their claimants with any significant advantage, this *cinnabryl* nevertheless represents a point of contention between both these two baronies and the bordering nations, Torreón and Hule.

Vilaverde currently operates the only two large mines in Terra Vermelha. Scouts and prospectors from Texeiras and Torreón roam constantly, occasionally finding deposits of *cinnabryl*. Torreón, with its strong military, is in the best position to overrun Terra Vermelha and seize its treasure. However, the Treaty of Tampicos keeps the nations in line, more or less.

The treaty states that the first nation to raise its flag above a desired mining site gains the right to mine there. To raise a flag, a messenger must bring the news to his or her nation's ruler, then return with an official delegate and a mining writ. This first step is the most dangerous since rivals often kill envoys so their own flags can be raised first. More than once have armies clashed over a treacherous ambush or falsified writ.

Settlements in the Red Lands include the two official Vilaverdan mines, Mina do Sul and Mina do

Norte (South Mine and North Mine), and two nearby, unsavory camps. As their names suggest, southern Campo-Ladrão is home to bandits looking for other nation's prospectors, and northern Campo dos Ogros bolsters its might with ogre mercenaries.

Brigands, goblinoids, and foul monsters also reside in the Red Lands. Some of these inhabitants can be persuaded to work with forces from one of the four neighboring nations for outrageous fees. However, they are not terribly loyal and tend to switch loyalties whenever they receive a higher offer. Like most natives of Terra Vermelha, when not accepting mercenary pay—and sometimes even while they are—these raiders prey on miners, caravans, and border villages.

One of the more interesting features of the Red Lands is the ruined city known as Antro do Dragão, the Dragon Den. Originally built thousands of years ago by Oltecs, the city shows signs of later habitation by Nithians, elves, and dwarves. The city remains in remarkably good condition for its age because no one has spent enough time in it to cause much damage. Whether or not the place is actually the home of a dragon remains unknown; however, some powerful creature definitely guards the city and its riches.

Torreón and Narvaez

The dark lands of Torreón and Narvaez are plagued by the Red Curse, poverty, and persecution. These states produce the finest mercenaries on the coast. They view the Red Curse very much as a curse, a punishment sent from the Immortals; perhaps it is. I know one thing: The people of these nations, perhaps more than anywhere else, want to end the curse.

—*The Chronicle of the Curse*
by Don Luis de Manzanas

The humans of these baronies are primarily of Ispan descent, with strong traces of Oltec blood. Narvaez and Torreón are also home to many elf and dwarf families, and a few members of other races are residents of larger settlements in the two states. The people of both states are stereotyped as brave and passionate and are reputed to be fine warriors.

Torreón and Narvaez are known as lands of mercenaries, supplying professional soldiers to other nations of the Savage Coast. Torreóner mercenaries, found throughout the Savage Coast, are known for their loyalty and skill; Narvaezan mercenaries are valued for their fierceness and high standards. Sellswords of both nations are considered skilled professionals, well worth the money required to hire them. While the people of the Sea Powers may dominate the oceans with their navies, these states have strong land forces to be reckoned with.

Each of these nations has a long and violent history of wars and conquests that have allowed them to achieve their present status. The harsh conditions have made their people tough survivors. As a result, Torreón and Narvaez are the most populous of the Savage Baronies, each covering a comparatively large area.

Because of their aggressive histories, these states are often rightly viewed with trepidation. The ruler of Torreón dreams of expanding her nation's boundaries to include more resources and riches. The leaders of Narvaez believe theirs is the only true religion, and many of their more assertive members want to carry the flame of Ixion to the other baronies, even if doing so requires force of arms. Narvaez mounted such a crusade only five years ago aided by Torreón and the Sea Powers. Only by presenting a united front were the remaining baronies able to stave off the military might of these four nations. Narvaez and its allies would probably have worn down their opponents had Hule not chosen to attack all the baronies just then, forcing them to put aside their arguments and face the greater threat.

Now—despite their threatening postures, dreams of conquests, and crusades—both Torreón and Narvaez are weakened by internal problems: Poverty cripples Torreón, and unrest within the clergy paralyzes Narvaez. Both states try to build and consolidate their forces so they can one day achieve their goals. If those goals were more similar, few obstacles would keep the two states from unifying into a force against which no others could stand.

Baronía de Torreón

This land is notorious for its poverty but respected for its mercenaries, who travel to all parts of the Savage Coast. The majority of Torreón's people are poor, barely managing to eke out a living by farming. Those who are able become mercenaries to fight—and sometimes die—in someone else's war, leaving their families behind. Most mercenaries earn enough to break the cycle of poverty that enslaves them, but seldom do they make enough extra to send hard coin home for family. Instead, sellswords help their family and friends by encouraging them to become mercenaries as well, passing on rumors of opportunities and putting in a good word when they can. It is a Torreóner aphorism that gaining fighting prowess is the best way to break away from the poverty of the land. Since most Torreóner mercenaries come from deprived backgrounds, they are unwilling to lose steady pay and are loyal to those who supply it.

Thus, while Torreón is a poor land, it is also reputed to produce the most steadfast mercenaries on the Savage Coast. Other nations welcome Torreóner mercenaries for their reliability and worry at the thought of those same mercenaries being turned against them. The existence of so many fighting men and women in Torreón strengthens the nation's reputation as a formidable military presence.

The Nation

One of the few land-locked baronies, Torreón is built around the rich river valley of Rio Guadiana and its tributaries—Rio Frio, Rio Torrentes, Rio Tuntos, and Rio Fangoso. Beyond the rich farmland of the river valleys, most of Torreón's hills and flats are thickly forested. Grasslands ripple only in the east where Torreón shares a border with Texeiras and Terra Vermelha. Note that in the east, Torreón occupies the higher ground above the cliffs known as O Grande Escarpamento (which Espans call La

Grande Escarpadura). This geographical feature defines—and defends—Torreón's southern borders.

Torreón has had a violent history. The first political entity to appear in this region was the Barony of Cristobal, founded in 916 on Rio Torrentes. Almost a quarter century later, some successful adventurers settled down and created the Baronies of Alcazar (in 940) and Torreón (in 941). Later still, the Barony of Los Elegidos was established to the north (along Rio Tuntos) and the Barony of Morales in the center (at the junction of Rio Frio and Rio Fangoso).

The founding of Morales created a problem for Torreón because Morales was laid out in a position where it could control river traffic between Torreón and the other small baronies. With an eye to preventing future problems, Torreón attacked Morales. To settle ongoing border conflicts, Torreón also attacked all its other neighbors. Torreón conquered Morales and Alcazar, extending its holdings to the north, east, and west, weakening Elegidos and Cristobal as well.

Torreón then consolidated its gains, rapidly building several settlements to control extensive portions of the river valleys. A couple of years later, Elegidos disappeared completely and mysteriously, removing a threat from Torreón's northern border. A decade later, Cristobal relinquished its barony claims. Torreón left the remnants of Cristobal as a buffer between itself and the goblinoids of the Yazak Steppes. The tower served to blunt the most recent invasion attempt before being destroyed.

Since consolidating, Torreón has been an aggressive, somewhat expansionist nation. Its baroness, Doña Isabel, plans to continue building her armed forces in the hopes of someday conquering both Texeiras and Terra Vermelha. However, her military build-up has wrecked the local economy through excessive taxation.

The People

Torreón has a racially mixed population. About one-third of its people are elves; in addition, at least half the people in Torreón have some elven blood. The rest of the population is human, leavened by a very few members of other races. Torreón's violent history and prevalent poverty attract few people from other nations (it's hard to imagine a Torreóner native as a model of "the good life"), leaving these humans and elves to the lands they have inhabited for centuries. The humans of this nation are not as mixed as in other baronies; here, they are of primarily Oltec descent, and those of Ispan or Ispan and Oltec mixed ancestry are quite rare.

The common people of Torreón are farmers, but many of those farmers have fighting experience. Torreóners are known to be brave, passionate, hot-tempered, and proud. Like the people of Texeiras, Torreóners are quick to suggest a duel over the smallest offense. Hardships have produced generations of tough and ruthless soldiers in this barony.

Warriors are common in Torreón. The Myrmidon kit is seen most often. Some Honorbound, Swashbucklers, Local Heroes, Gauchos, and a few Defenders (devoted to Faña) are also seen. The nobility is small in Torreón, so the Noble kit is uncommon. While most Torreóner nobles are elven, the rest are humans of pure Ispan descent.

Torreón also has a fair number of Militant wizards and War Priests, but few rogues live in Torreón, which lacks the large population centers and the wealth needed to support them. Most Torreóner rogues are Scouts or Swashbucklers, the latter kit also being used by most Torreóner wizards. Some Inheritors do live in Torreón, but they keep to the larger towns or the company of nobles because they are despised by peasants and Afflicted.

The mercenaries of Torreón are reliable and reasonably priced. A typical fee is one oro (gold piece) per person per week with a bonus percentage allotted for experience, so most common mercenaries in the company actually earn about five dies (silver pieces) per week. Several well-organized mercenary companies operate in the barony, each of which follows a skilled captain. These mercenary captains gather for an Assembly once a year to discuss issues important to them all, such as payment scales and employment opportunities. A person who wishes to form a company of his or her own must go before the Assembly, where the current captains vote on the applicant. If approved by a simple majority vote, the applicant can recruit a mercenary band and seek employment. The captains approve only those individuals who they believe will uphold the honor of Torreón and obey the Assembly's decisions.

Torreóner mercenaries prefer not to fight against other companies of Torreóner mercenaries but will do so if ordered by their employers. However, employers should realize that if they order such a battle, leaders of the involved Torreóner companies meet before the battle and allow any mercenaries who have friends or relatives in the other company a chance to refuse combat, without loss of honor or pay. All Torreóner mercenary captains adhere to this policy, a fact known to most potential employers across the Savage Coast.

Note that some mercenary companies are composed of only Afflicted. Their prices, leadership, and attendance at the Assemblies are the same as for standard companies. Afflicted companies are shunned in polite society but are known to cause dread and disgust in their enemies, sometimes giving them a psychological advantage.

The Red Curse
The Red Curse is a constant threat to the people of Torreón. While citizens in the larger towns do their best to ignore the curse, a very large proportion of the people in Torreón—as much as half—are Afflicted. Some Afflicted join mercenary companies; most others live in small enclaves. Small size, however, does not guarantee small incidence. Afflicted enclaves are found everywhere in Torreón: ragged sections in towns and villages, tiny farming villages along rivers, and hidden camps in forests and hills.

The people of Torreón never forget the Red Curse, and those who are able go to great lengths to avoid it. Unlike those in the Sea Powers, Afflicted here are not able to pretend they are normal even when among other Afflicted. The Afflicted of Torreón hide themselves from view and avoid contact with most other people, even other Afflicted, shunning themselves before others can.

Industry and Trade
Torreón's biggest "export" is mercenaries, who serve as military forces, castle or fortress guards, and marines on Texeiran ships. The government receives a small share of all money earned by Torreóner mercenary companies.

Torreón also exports some wood, food, and even a little *red steel*. The state gets most of its *cinnabryl* from Terra Vermelha or by trading *red steel* with Slagovich. Torreón, home of the discoverer of *red steel*, has stockpiled the material for years. In addition, Torreón's mercenary companies, which use quite a lot of *cinnabryl*, also retain a sizeable amount of *red steel*. The government of Torreón takes about 10% of this *red steel* for taxes, giving the barony an ample supply of the magical metal. Mercenary companies use the rest of their *red steel* to arm themselves. Torreón's capital, Ciudad de León, harbors a famous Guild of Swordmakers whose *red steel* weapons are prized throughout the Savage Coast.

Torreón's best trading partner is Renardy, with which an overland trade route is maintained. Torreón exports *red steel*, weapons, mercenaries, wood for ships, and a small amount of *cinnabryl* to Renardy. In return, Renardy provides wine, food, and finished goods. Torreón has also begun acquiring *smokepowder* in hopes of building *smokepowder* cannons; the cannons have not yet proved successful. Torreón imports *smokepowder* from Gargoña, Renardy (who gets it from Cimmaron), and some directly from Cimmaron. By using several sources, Torreón hides the sum of its acquisitions.

Religion
Religion is of some importance in Torreón, where Faña is revered before all other Immortals. The General and the Judge are very popular among Torreóners, while Milan, Valerias, and the Ambassador have small cults. As a result of contact with Narvaez, Ixion's following has been growing in Torreón.

The Ruler
Baronesa Isabel "La Terrible" de Torreón y Morales, a human noble in her early 30s, rules Torreón with an iron fist. The baronesa has been in charge of the state since her early teens after the death of her father. She had to withstand ruthless political attacks in order to survive, but this has only made her more ruthless in her approach to politics.

Doña Isabel plans to build an army of conquistadors and eventually take over Terra Vermelha and Texeiras. To raise funds, she has instituted many new taxes on her people, driving many of them into poverty. This poverty is what has encouraged the people of Torreón to become mercenaries or enlist in the baronesa's armies.

Doña Isabel needs most of her troops just to guard the outer limits of her territory against bandits or goblinoid raids. The remaining troops enforce collection of her unpopular taxes among the population. Torreón probably has an army large enough to take over Terra Vermelha right now; however, because of the recent wars, Torreón wants to hold off on the attack and consolidate its forces. After all, an attempt to take over Terra Vermelha would break the Treaty of Tampicos, probably causing the other baronies to ally against Torreón. The only possible exception is Narvaez, which has long been on friendly terms with Torreón and could probably be counted as a supporter.

Doña Isabel's driving ambition is to be able to leave a good inheritance for her heirs, even though she does not yet have any children. Doña Isabel's heir presumptive is a younger sister, Rosa, a lovely girl in her early 20s. Despite her greedy and power-hungry style, the baronesa recognizes the need for a successor, but she still harbors fantasies of marrying for love. She would be happy to leave to her sister the political responsibility of marrying to produce an heir.

If Doña Isabel's family should die out, the succession would pass to her elven adviser, Augusto, who has counseled her family since the barony began and who was a companion of the adventurers who founded both Alcazar and Torreón. Augusto is a Noble fighter who, not quite two centuries old, could potentially rule Torreón for another two centuries.

Like Augusto, many other nobles of Torreón are elves, and most have been around since before any of the Savage Baronies were founded. The early inhabitants of Torreón came to an agreement

with the prominent elven families of the area and have always considered them part of the barony's nobility. For this reason, the preferred language of the nobility, and of diplomacy and etiquette, is elvish.

The Capital

The capital of Torreón is Ciudad de León, a town of 7,400 that sits on the state's southern border. Slightly more than half of the townsfolk are elves. More than 1,000 half-elves live here, and most of the other citizens are human. Ciudad de León is home to most of Torreón's nobility, though each other town and village in the barony boasts one or two noble families. Besides the nobility, the capital also houses numerous merchants, crafters, soldiers, and a small labor force consisting mostly of poor Afflicted.

Ciudad de León is an orderly town, safe because of the squadrons of soldiers that patrol its streets. The townspeople live in designated districts, so nobles live among nobles, merchants among merchants, and so forth. The Afflicted are in this manner kept from mixing with high society in Torreón.

Other Places of Interest

A town of 6,800, Ciudad Morales lies in the center of Torreón. It is a major trading center for the barony; most of its people are merchants, crafters, and laborers. The barony also has six major villages: Casanegra, a village of retired soldiers named for the recently ruined tower near which it was built; Puebla de Alcázar, a farming village that is a headquarters for prospectors and expeditions headed into Terra Vermelha; Villavieja, a farming village that is one of the largest producers of food in the Savage Baronies; Pueblo Real, a village devoted to farming and forestry; Las Guajacas, a farming village in which the entire population of over 500 individuals is Afflicted; and Las Chambas, another trading and farming center. Note that Las Guajacas houses the largest concentration of Afflicted anywhere in the Savage Baronies, possibly on the entire Savage Coast. It is a somber and eerie place, where haunted people go about in masks and cloaks even during the hottest days. An air of depression lies thick over Las Guajacas, and few visitors stay for long.

Torreón also has two major forts, Castillo Grande and Torres Calientes, both of which help defend the state's western borders from goblinoids. Castillo Grande sits on La Escarpadura, its towering form overlooking Ciudad de León and serving as a deterrent to possible Narvaezan invaders.

Torreón also owns several sets of ruins, most from the recent wars: the villages of Chiquitín and El Lugar, both deserted settlements (most buildings are still intact), their populations drained to support the war; the "Fortaleza," sacked by goblinoids and rumored to be a storehouse of treasure protected by traps and vile monsters; and two towers, Torre del Duende and Bastión de los Caballeros, both ruined by Hule. Torreón would like to rebuild these two towers, as well as the one at Casanegra, and has been looking for bold adventurers willing to reclaim them.

Baronía de Narvaez

Although Narvaez is a larger barony and has a higher population than its neighbors, its people still suffer from excessive taxation by a brutal rulership. In addition, Narvaez endures the Inquisition, which appears unexpectedly to check the loyalty of commoners and nobles alike, ensuring devotion to Ixion.

Narvaez is known for its mercenary forces but is also seen as a dangerous nation that wants to thrust its patron Immortal—and his accompanying Inquisitor—upon the other nations of the coast. The nation has no real allies, though it gets along reasonably well with Torreón, Texeiras, and Gargoña.

The Nation

Like Torreón, most of Narvaez sits along a river valley; the barony's lands run mostly to farmland and forest, broken by small ranges of hills. The land is very fertile in Narvaez, supporting good farming.

Also like Torreón, Narvaez has had a long and bloody history. It was the first barony founded along the Savage Coast and is the only one ever officially chartered by the distant government of Thyatis. Narvaez once stretched all along the western coast of the Gulf of Hule, from La Escarpadura in the north to the Claw Peninsula in the south. This claim covered land on which humans, dwarves, elves, and tortles were already living, including the lands now known as Cimmaron, Almarrón, Gargoña, and part of present-day Texeiras.

Three years after Narvaez was founded, the southern tip of the barony declared independence. This area eventually became Cimmaron. A year later, another small area broke away from Narvaez, declaring itself the Barony of Montoya; held by elves and dwarves, Montoya included what is known today as Castillo de Los Hidalgos and the nearby range of hills.

In 913, Narvaez was split between two heirs; the north, including most of the present-day barony,

remained Narvaez. The south, including present-day Almarrón and Gargoña, became the Barony of Sotto. Sotto had a very rocky history, most of which is detailed under Gargoña and Almarrón.

Narvaez remained relatively stable until 930, when the Barony of Marino splintered off, remaining independent until conquered by Texeiras in 958. In 935, the Barony of Quimeras also declared independence from Narvaez, claiming the land from Ciudad Quimeras to La Escarpadura. Narvaez, fed up, began building military forces. In 937, Narvaez attacked both Quimeras and Montoya, and after a short war, reabsorbed them both. Most Montoyan dwarves fled to other places, but the elves remained to become fully integrated into the population in Narvaez.

By the end of these hostilities, Narvaez established approximately the same borders it holds today. However, the military build-up continued, growing numbers of troops helping Narvaez to retain its territory for more than 70 years. Despite this growth, the barony had remained relatively peaceful, concentrating on fortifying its holdings and building power.

However, five years ago, internal theological dispute escalated into a holy war in Narvaez; to unite the feuding factions, Barón Hugo declared external enemies. The northern states of Torreón, Texeiras, and Vilaverde allied with Narvaez against the remaining baronies. This manufactured war was supplanted by a greater threat when Hule attacked all the baronies, and was later postponed again so the baronies could deal with increasing goblinoid raids. For the last year or so Narvaez has been peaceful, but other baronies still remember the attempted conquest, and many consider Narvaez an enemy.

The People

Like the people of Torreón, the folk of Narvaez are brave, passionate, and easily offended. The hardships faced by Narvaez forged a people both rugged and pitiless. Narvaezans are also devoutly religious, or at least act devout to avoid being persecuted by the state's elite troops, usually known as Los Matónes ("the bullies," with slang connotations of "killer" and "rat"). In addition, natives of Narvaez feel superior to other Guardianos because they are confident in the righteousness of their religion and because they are the oldest of the Savage Baronies—some go so far as to say the only legitimate barony.

The people of Narvaez are mostly human, though some dwarves, elves, and half-elves make homes here as well. A few tortle peasant families remain, scattered widely throughout Narvaez, living as peaceful farmers. Members of other races are usually only visitors. Economically, Narvaezans are mixed; while many are peasants, a substantial middle class (which includes the clergy here) and a relatively large nobility also exists.

Like Torreón, Narvaez is known for its mercenaries. Warriors are the most common here, but clerics and rogues are also common. Practically no wizards or druids exist in Narvaez because they are considered heretics to Ixion and have been outlawed. Multi-class and dual-class characters are more frequently encountered than wizards or druids.

In Narvaez, the most common kit is Myrmidon. War Priests, Local Heroes, Nobles, Swashbucklers, Honorbound, Gauchos, and Scouts are seen as well. Inheritors and Defenders are not legal in Narvaez, nor are they welcome, but sometimes such characters are seen anyway. Swashbucklers have a special place in Narvaez; considered lawbreakers by the government, they are often heroes to the local peasants and merchants. Swashbucklers enjoy thwarting the schemes of the church and of Los Matónes.

The mercenaries of Narvaez should be handled like those of Torreón, with three exceptions. First, they do not have an Assembly; a mercenary captain must be granted a charter through the church before building a company, and all companies are responsible to the church. Second, no Afflicted belong to Narvaezan mercenary companies. Third, some Narvaezans become mercenaries simply so they can travel to other lands and avoid religious persecution.

The best Narvaezan mercenaries are sometimes asked to join Los Elegidos (the correct title of Los Matónes) who answer directly to the baron. The current leader of Los Elegidos is Angelíc de Ariéla, an elf Swashbuckler ranger from a tiny elven settlement in Bosque de Los Ojos. Though she takes her job seriously, Angelíc secretly harbors more liberal views than most of Los Elegidos. She is reasonable in her attitudes and is actually a nice person when allowed to relax. She has been trying to curb the violence, bullying, and persecution found in so many Matónes. Despite Angelíc's efforts, most of Los Elegidos remain little more than thugs.

Los Elegidos have also begun spreading rumors about Angelíc, claiming that she is a sadistic punisher who can use "elven ways" to painfully wring information from even the strongest person; while this is untrue, the threat of someone even worse than the average member of Los Elegidos has worked to loosen many a tongue.

The Red Curse

The people of Narvaez believe the Red Curse to be Ixion's punishment for those who are not devout followers; in a way, they are correct. It is the clergy that distributes *cinnabryl* to the needy, but the church relies more on *maintain* spells to keep people healthy. Those who do not see their clergy regularly are thus most likely to become Afflicted. When a citizen manifests an Affliction, he is moved to one of the special enclaves outside the state's major settlements, maintained by Ixion's followers.

The Afflicted of Narvaez believe they are being punished for some transgression and spend much of their time trying to atone by serving Ixion. Many Afflicted become priests themselves, but Afflicted priests usually retreat to monasteries or serve in otherwise isolated capacities; they are not allowed to become part of the church hierarchy.

Industry and Trade
Fertile Narvaez trades food for *cinnabryl*, usually with Texeiras. Excessive food exports have occasionally provoked famine and peasant revolts. The barony also exports mercenaries, and like Torreón, earns a percentage from all companies based in Narvaez.

Besides *cinnabryl*, Narvaez is currently interested in buying wood for ships and *smokepowder* to experiment with building big guns. Narvaez relies heavily on Texeiran fleets for trade, but would like to change that situation. Slowly, trade routes are being forged with Torreón and Gargoña, with Torreón supplying wood and Gargoña supplying some *smokepowder*.

Religion
Narvaez is the only barony in which religion is an important aspect of life, and it is of utmost importance. Narvaezans are profoundly pious followers of their Immortal patrons, in particular Ixion, who is regarded as higher ranking than all other Immortals. The Inquisitor is also revered. The General, the Ambassador, and the Judge are all considered lesser powers who are worthy of some, though little, respect. Narvaezan Swashbucklers also worship Milan and Valerias.

Knights of Narvaez commonly go on religious quests to retrieve holy artifacts or bring the good word (with the help of their mighty swords) to faraway natives. One such "recovered" artifact now lies at the Grande Catedral de Ciudad Quimeras, a heavily fortified area and the focus of constant pilgrimages. Ixion's philosophy is taken very seriously in Narvaez, to the point where anyone suspected of the least irreverence risks prompt imprisonment, ruthless "questioning," and merciless execution for heresy by burning at the stake. The Inquisitor is the patron of those who punish heretics. The recent bloody wars elevated her to great importance among the worshippers of Ixion.

The Ruler
Barón Hugo "El Despiadado" de Narvaez y Montoya holds the reins of statehood in a tight grip. Baron Hugo "the Merciless" is a human War Priest of Ixion who controls the church as well as the nation. The baron's leadership of Narvaez is never questioned in the slightest. A man in his late 40s, Baron Hugo directs most of his efforts to foreign affairs, such as building a war fleet to break the Sea Powers' hold on shipping.

The baron has a devoted wife and four children. His eldest daughter, Catalina, four years ago ran off with Don Crístobal, Baron of Guadalante, one of the leaders of the Gauchos who attacked Ciudad Quimeras during the recent wars (see "Other Places of Interest" in the following text). Catalina apparently became so enchanted with the suave Gaucho that she married him without her father's permission or knowledge. Naturally, Baron Hugo was infuriated at his daughter for allying with the enemy and refuses to send a dowry to Señor Crístobal, despite periodic requests.

Baron Hugo's oldest son, Monte, recently turned 20. Monte has a lovely young bride and is the obvious heir to the rulership of Narvaez. The baron's third child is another son, Julio. Just a year younger than Monte, Julio has married the daughter of the baronesa of Gargoña. Baron Hugo's youngest, Damita, though still in her teens, promises to be one of the most manipulative women to ever live in the baronies.

Baron Hugo does not get along well with the other barons, and his is the only nation that has failed to ratify the Treaty of Tampicos.

The Capital
Puerto Morillos is a large town with a population of 12,300, the largest in the Savage Baronies. It suffered a devastating attack by Swashbucklers of the southern baronies during the recent war, and much of the city burned. The ruins are now home to Afflicted and rogues, though the government is trying to clean up and restore the area to chase out the riffraff.

Though a bustling center for commerce, Puerto Morillos is one of the most boring towns on the Savage Coast. Los Matónes watch for anything out of the ordinary and are quick to stop any disturbance. The general attitude of townsfolk is subdued, and the only true excitement occurs when a Swashbuckler decides to cause it, whether by making a speech from a church tower, challenging a member of Los Matónes to a duel, or just walking around in an outrageous outfit and being friendly. Swashbucklers enjoy baiting Los Matónes, and many are quite skilled at the witty banter and flashy swordplay needed to embarrass the thugs. The better blades are also fleet enough to evade capture if things go wrong. It is not unusual for Swashbucklers to wear masks in Puerto Morillos, though such a thing is, of course, illegal.

Other Places of Interest

Three major villages are located in Narvaez: Almavegas, a quiet and well-protected farming village; Paz del Sol, a major trading center built where an important trade route crosses the Rio Guadiana; and Punto-Eseobar, another trading center that handles most commerce with Texeiras and Torreón. Two exceptionally large castles are in Narvaez: Castillo Blanco, the oldest baronial structure still standing; and Castillo de los Hidalgos, once the capital of Montoya, now a formidable barrier between Narvaez and Saragón. Ruins smudge the Narvaezan landscape, including the remains of Ciudad Quimeras (a town that once served as the capital of the Barony of Quimeras) and Los Peregrinos and Puente-Guadiana (once important fishing villages). All three towns were sacked in the recent wars by Gauchos from the southern baronies. Also, numerous hamlets and tiny farms too small to be military targets survive throughout Narvaez.

Nearby Lands

Outside the baronies themselves are a number of interesting geographical features. Colinas Grutescas are the badlands east of Narvaez; Barón Hugo does not believe these lands to be worth claiming, but rumors circulate of cavern networks hiding ancient settlements and great treasures. Pirates and other bandits seek shelter in the region.

The ruins of Torre Cristobal, located west of Torreón along Rio Torrentes, also spark interest in taverns and around campfires. The first lord of Cristobal claimed the area around the tower as a barony in 916. Nearly 65 years later, his granddaughter relinquished the title of Baron and gave up her family's claim to surrounding lands, while still maintaining independence. The tower was ruined by goblinoids about two years ago, and remaining members of the Cristobal family can occasionally be found wandering the Savage Coast looking for a few stalwart adventurers to help them reclaim the tower.

Gargoña, Almarrón, and Saragón

Now I come to the piece which describes my nation of Saragón and her sister states, Gargoña and Almarrón. Collectively known as the Enlightened Lands, these baronies are the centers for art and wisdom on the Savage Coast. The Curse is studied here, and those affected by it are treated in an illuminated manner. If the knowledge to remove the curse exists in books and scrolls, those writings will be found in the Enlightened Lands or will eventually make their way here. It has been one of my quests to gather knowledge of the history of the Savage Coast, and to aid in that endeavor, I have commissioned several groups in these lands to search for artifacts of past civilizations. Perhaps they will provide some clue to the origins of the curse for its eventual removal.

—*The Chronicle of the Curse*
by Don Luis de Manzanas

These three states are grouped for several reasons. First, their governments are the least tyrannical among the Savage Baronies. Almarrón was actually a democracy for a time before it became corrupt when the worst dictator in the history of the Savage Baronies took power. The people have recently restored a member of the old nobility to power, and he is a fair and just ruler. Gargoña has remained at peace for the last 25 years, breaking its studied neutrality only twice: first, lending support to the southern baronies to keep the northern ones from overrunning the region; and again, to prevent Hule from achieving similar ambitions. In both cases, Gargoña acted more as a mediator, sending no troops into battle. The leader of Saragón also strives for peace, but leaps to the defense of the downtrodden or the weak.

The rulers of all three states encourage learning and thinking among their people. This promotion of learning and philosophy is another natural grouping for these baronies. Because of this, they are often referred to as the Enlightened States. Gargoña, with its many artists, poets, and philosophers, is considered the cultural center of the Savage Baronies. Saragón is also a center for thinking and learning, home to many sages and scientists. While Almarrón, after a long period of darkness, is just beginning on the road to enlightenment, the state is already becoming known for its fine crafters. All three states encourage the use of magic, and wizards are more common here than elsewhere in the baronies.

In addition to the comparative abundance of wizards, these three states also have a tradition of swashbuckling warriors and rogues. Rather than seafaring Swashbucklers like those found in Vilaverde and Texeiras, the Swashbucklers of the Enlightened States are urban dwellers whose suave and sophisticated air, combined with their streetwise nature, make them accepted anywhere from the courts of nobles to the back alleys of the urban peasantry.

Finally, Gargoña, Almarrón, and Saragón are close together geographically and face many of the same threats. Both Almarrón and Gargoña were formed from territories that once belonged to Narvaez. All three states, because of their proximity to Narvaez and history with that state, are endangered by the aggressive nature of its religion (though Gargoña suffers a much lesser threat because of its peaceful nature).

The Enlightened States tend to think themselves just a little bit better than the other baronies, and perhaps they are. Encouraging peace and freedom, they are the center of baronial culture and the baronies most likely to achieve a peaceful unification.

Baronía de Gargoña

Gargoña is the mildest of the Savage Baronies. Its ruler, Doña Esperanza, works for peace and has given her people a secure and almost prosperous life for the past 25 years. Though Gargoña would probably be unable to resist an invasion, the nation is less of a target than some because of its apparent neutrality. Gargoña is protected from hostilities initiated beyond the Savage Baronies because Saragón, Narvaez, and Almarrón shield it from any overland threats, and the navies of Vilaverde and Texeiras block threats from the sea.

Gargoña is recognized as the center of culture in the Savage Baronies. Since the state is generally viewed as politically neutral, its scholars are sometimes invited to other nations to serve as advisers or teachers. Most Baronials think of Gargoña as a pleasant place, but some wonder about the fortitude of Gargoñans themselves; they are not seen as people of action.

The Nation

Gargoña is primarily farmland, though dense forests lie along most of the state's borders. A large

swamp, Delta de Pozaverde, helps protect the nation from ocean-borne threats, its shallow waters keeping deep-keeled sailing ships from the interior. Skiffs powered by oar or pole ply the waterways of the delta, ferrying commerce to and from seagoing ships.

Like so many of the other baronies, Gargoña has had a history of conflict and sorrow. As mentioned in the last chapter, Narvaez peacefully split into two states in 913: Narvaez in the north and the Barony of Sotto in the south. Sotto was never a stable barony; it existed for less than a quarter century and faced near-constant crises during its short existence.

In 921, the State of Escudor declared independence from Sotto. The tiny nation, built around Castillo de Tordegena, was released by Sotto without a fight and remained independent until it fell to an expanding Almarrón, as detailed below.

Five years later, the Barony of Rivera followed suit; it included Ciudad Real, the Delta de Pozaverde south of Río Maldito, and several square miles of land within Sotto between the river and the present-day border of Almarrón. Sotto objected to this further splintering but was forced to release the barony after a short civil war.

Another eight shaky years passed before the Barony of Gargoña broke from Sotto. When founded, Gargoña encompassed only the land west of Las Navas to the present-day border of Saragón. Again Sotto tried to force the rebellious area to remain united, and again Sotto failed. Gargoña was granted independence in 934. Still, Sotto harbored ill-will toward Gargoña and declared war on the tiny barony in 936.

Despite its size, Gargoña was better organized and fielded a more effective fighting force than its parent barony. By the end of the year, Gargoña had not only defended its original claim, but conquered northern Sotto down to the Sierra Borgosa hills. Gargoña allowed the southern portions of Sotto to reorganize independently; they formed the State of Almarrón.

Gargoña and its new sibling barony remained at peace for just over four decades, consolidating territory, and initiating trade. Gargoña became a stable and reasonably prosperous small state. However, in 977, Almarrón attacked and absorbed Escudor, then turned north and attacked Gargoña and Rivera. To resist the Almarróñan forces, Rivera and Gargoña negotiated a merger, keeping the name Gargoña, in 978. This stronger Gargoña was at least able to hold back Almarróñan advances, while within the aggressive state, Nueva Esperanza took advantage of Almarrón's distraction to declare independence. Almarrón sued for peace with Gargoña in 979.

Gargoña rebuilt its war-trampled borders, and in 986, Doña Esperanza came to power. The baronesa began a policy of neutrality regarding all other baronies, sealing alliances both diplomatically and through astutely arranged marriages. Gargoña has remained at peace ever since. Even when Gargoña allied with the southern baronies against the northern in the recent wars, Doña Esperanza was able to maintain relative neutrality. Aided by her familial relationship with the baron of Narvaez (her daughter is married to Don Hugo's son), Doña Esperanza eventually negotiated the peace that allowed the baronies to cooperate against their larger common enemy, Hule.

The People

Though most inhabitants of Gargoña are human, their tolerant attitude recognizes other races as equals. The barony includes settled families from all races of the Savage Coast, even a few peaceful lizard kin and goblinoids. The typical Gargoñan is an artist, poet, or scholar, yearning for adventure and seeking inspiration. Warriors, rogues and wizards are all popular character types. Priests are less common.

The Swashbuckler is the most encountered kit of Gargoña, though many wizards use the Mystic kit. Defenders, Honorbound, and Scouts have their places, as do the rarer Nobles, Local Heroes, and Gauchos. The Local Hero is the kit most often used for clerics and druids in Gargoña.

The people of Gargoña are dreamers, generally optimistic but given to occasional fits of melancholy. They enjoy their reputations as scholars and artists, but are quick to point out that such skills do not make them any less able in a fight.

The Red Curse

The Red Curse is seen as a great malaise by the people of Gargoña and is the subject of many stories, plays, and treatises. Still, the detrimental effects of the curse are rarely found in Gargoña, and Gargoñan Afflicted are rare. While Gargoña's clergy might not be large, it is devoted; the priests of Gargoña make regular use of *maintain* spells to help people avoid the Red Curse's effects. The nation also imports some *cinnabryl*, most of which is purchased and used by those who have chosen an adventuring career.

The few Afflicted Gargoñans remain with their family and friends, who usually try to raise enough money to seek a cure. A few poets never seek respite because they believe the angst of the Red Curse provides them with better inspiration.

Industry and Trade

Gargoña's major exports include artists, scholars, and diplomats. Ciudad Real maintains a university;

while classes are given without cost (the school is supported by the government), students agree to tithe a portion of their wages to Gargoña for the rest of their lives. Many of Gargoña's skilled scholars work abroad as headmasters, tutors, or political advisers. While most remain in the baronies, graduates can be found in all nations of the Savage Coast, except for Herath and the lands of the lizard kin.

Gargoña also exports works of art, from paintings and sculptures to music and poems. Its people have made their own tools and instruments for decades but are beginning to import items of superior quality from the crafters of Almarrón. Gargoña also produces boats driven by oars or poles and supplies some *smokepowder* (from Cimmaron) to Narvaez.

Gargoña's major imports include small amounts of *cinnabryl* and food. Most *cinnabryl* comes from Vilaverde. Many mercenaries from Torreón and a few companies from Narvaez aid Gargoña's mediocre militia in policing the barony.

Religion

Many of the "enlightened" folk of Gargoña consider religion a foible to be avoided. Still, Valerias has a large following in Gargoña; both Milan and the Ambassador are respected as well. The General and the Judge have a few stalwart followers, and temples devoted to Al-Kalim and Ixion have appeared recently in the barony. Though Narvaezans are pleased to see a few converts in Gargoña, they frown at the tolerance Gargoñans show for other Immortals.

The Ruler

Baronesa Esperanza "La Ilustre" de Sotto y Rivera rules the nation of Gargoña. Descended from the noble family that once ruled Rivera, this educated lady came to power in Gargoña almost 25 years ago. Very few know it, but she was once a thief with the Local Hero kit. Bored with the life of a pampered noble, she stole for thrills, and as "La Pantera" was a notorious figure in the baronies. When Esperanza was 24, the baron of Gargoña died, and she was chosen to succeed him. Quickly earning her nickname "the Illustrious Baroness," she married into the old Sotto family to cement a political alliance, eventually finding love in the marriage as well. The baronesa gave birth to two daughters, both of whom have been married into ruling families in other baronies: The elder, Dulcinea, is wed to Julio, second son of Barón Hugo of Narvaez; the younger, Caterina, is married to Claudio de Montejo, one of the nobles of Saragón.

Now nearing 50, Doña Esperanza is considering whom she should name as her heir; while Dulcinea is more intelligent, her husband has a reasonable chance to become baron of Narvaez. While Dulcinea could unite Narvaez and Gargoña (if she inherits Gargoña), this could destroy Gargoña's neutrality and drag Gargoña into the periodic conflicts of Narvaez. Secretly, the baronesa is leaning toward naming Caterina the heir; while perhaps not as scholarly as her sister, Caterina is brave and charismatic. Besides, if her husband Don Claudio should come to lead Saragón (a distinct, if unlikely, possibility), the alliance between Saragón and Gargoña would be good for all parties involved.

While Gargoña has been free of wars and revolts, prosperity has had the concurrent effect of dulling the military's responsiveness. The baronesa relies primarily on a large and loyal, albeit mediocre, militia, backed with seasoned mercenaries from Torreón. Active troops, stationed near the remains of Castillo de Pardalupe, garrison the capital. The latter force is less concerned with Saragón than with Yazi raids.

The Capital

Ciudad Real is a large town with a population of 11,700. Famous for its generous patrons, the capital is a haven for literature and the arts. Many fine artists, poets, and philosophers have come to Ciudad Real and flourished in the philanthropic atmosphere. Ciudad Real is the heart of Gargoña's culture, and in turn, the heart of the culture of Los Guardianos. Ciudad Real is home to many interesting and unusual people; visitors can find entertainment in inns and taverns, visit theaters, or talk to philosophers. Musicians often play in the streets, entertaining for their own pleasure, but accepting tips given to them by passersby.

Other Places of Interest

Besides the capital, the only major settlement in Gargoña is the village of Las Navas, the backbone of food production in the barony. A fishing village of about 800 people, Las Navas also serves as a produce depot for the dozens of farms sprawled throughout the Río Maldito valley. On occasion, poets or philosophers come to Las Navas for quiet, and painters come to capture bucolic landscapes, but in general, the village is empty of the artists and Swashbucklers of Ciudad Real. Gauchos flood Las Navas during the annual cattle drive that brings stock to be butchered or sent downriver to the capital; however, the Gauchos of Gargoña are a little less rough than those found in Guadalante and Cimmaron, less prone to fights and more open to music and other cultured pursuits.

Las Navas lies on a route between the capital and the ruins of the proud castle, Castillo de Pardalupe. Like so many forts, towers, and castles in the baronies, this one was sacked during the recent wars. It fell to the same formidable band of Yazi gnolls that laid waste to Castillo de Tordegena in Almarrón. Doña Esperanza has sent militia, Torreón mercenaries, and more than one party of adventurers to reclaim Castillo de Pardalupe. However, monsters seem firmly established in the castle. No matter how often they are cleared, more arrive within days. In fact, Castillo de Pardalupe has become home to a deepspawn (described in the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome); this vile creature lurks in the lowest sublevels beneath the castle, constantly replenishing the monsters found there.

Another place of interest is Isla del Cayo. The small island, once no more than a low coral reef, is now home to several tiny farms and a few small communities of Afflicted, mostly the Afflicted poets who have chosen this island for self-imposed exile. Here, they can live off the land and stare at the sea and sky, wallowing in the angst and sorrow that they hope will give them inspiration for great works of art. The island sports a lighthouse on the eastern tip; it is run by a small family of Afflicted fishermen who have lived there for decades. Down the coast from Isla del Cayo is the site of a naval battle of the recent wars. Several Almarróñan and Texeiran ships lie under the waves.

Bosque de los Ojos, the "Forest of the Eyes," is a light forest that sits on the border of Gargoña and Narvaez. Rumored to be haunted, the forest is home to many unusual denizens, including more than a few monsters. The thick swamp of Delta de Pozaverde provides haven for bandits and is rumored to be the resting place of several pirate treasures.

Estado de Almarrón

Almarrón's character is a mystery to many people of the Savage Coast, even its own inhabitants. The state has gone through many ideological upheavals and has recently decided to try a new direction. First organized in 936, it was ruled for decades by a noble family, who led it through many struggles with other nations. Radical changes in sentiment and philosophy led to a democracy for a time, but corruption destroyed that experiment. From the chaos, a dictator rose to power. Recently, the dictator was overthrown, and a member of the nobility was installed as the nation's leader. The current baron wants to lead his state toward learning and enlightenment. Since Almarrón has gone through so many changes, outsiders do not know what to expect in policy or in reaction to outside events. The inhabitants (and even the ruler) are sometimes confused themselves.

Almarrón has always been reclusive; this inward focus has not changed with its new leader; this is the reason for the general lack of knowledge about the state. Like many Guardianos, Almarróñans have the reputation of hot-blooded Swashbucklers. Traders have noticed the new government is encouraging quality crafts in order to increase the nation's output of fine marketable goods. With no other confirmable information, everyone is waiting to see what happens.

The Nation

Much of Almarrón's territory is rocky, inhospitable hill country, but a large, fertile plain occupies the heart of the nation, supporting a majority of the population. Forested slopes and cliffs guard Almarrón's shores.

Almarrón, like so many other baronies, has had a bloody history. Organized from the confused southern portions of Sotto when that barony fell to Gargoña in 936, Almarrón faced difficulties from the very beginning; its people were disorganized and its nobles inexperienced. To help consolidate his new nation, the first baron of Almarrón unified his people in a crusade against the southern holdings of Nueva Esperanza, conquering that area in 939. The singularity of purpose forged in this conquest helped hold the state together for almost four decades.

About 15 years before the founding of Almarrón, a small barony called Escudor broke away from Sotto; when Almarrón emerged from the division of Sotto, Escudor was its neighbor. Unfortunately, Escudor's existence cut off Almarrón's access to the best route inland, and Almarrón blocked Escudor's route to the sea. Many disagreements simmered between the two states, finally boiling over into war in 977.

Almarrón defeated Escudor. Inspired by its victory, Almarrón immediately turned north to initiate hostilities with Gargoña and Rivera. Here it was not so fortunate, or perhaps it was simply better matched. The two states merged to resist Almarrón's aggression. On top of this, while war progressed in the north, the people of Nueva Esperanza began an internal war for independence. Led by their General Cimmaron, the people of Nueva Esperanza won their fight for freedom in 980.

The long years of tension and culminating defeats so disgusted the general populace that the people of Almarrón rose up and overthrew the baron. They embarked on a democracy, using old Traladaran writings as a basis for their government. Almarróñans maintained this experiment for almost 15 years, but revolutionary fervor had slain or exiled the most experienced leaders (the nobility). The people elected to office fell prey to indecision, endless argument, and greed.

In 994, poverty and hot tempers threatened to destroy Almarrón from within. Don Esteban, the

mayor of Ciudad Tejillas, intervened. Using the city's garrison, the mayor ousted rival factions, installed himself as dictator, and named himself "El Salvador" (the Savior). His self-proclaimed title was technically true because he did save Almarrón from complete collapse. However, he then initiated policies that made him very unpopular.

First, he seized what he perceived to be the nation's most important asset: the silver mines in Sierra del Plata, mines that supplied silver for coinage to many other nations. Don Esteban also established taxes on the state's other exports, including coffee and tobacco. Much of this wealth went directly to his own coffers rather than into a national treasury.

The people of Almarrón resented the usurper and his odious tyranny. The poorest peasants ran from the dictator's tax collectors and Torreóner mercenaries. Many bands of insurgents were formed, some dreaming of restoring the old democracy, others loyal to the old baron's still-living son, Barón Maximiliano de Almarrón y Escudor.

In 1008, after 12 years under the dictator, rebel forces were able to take advantage of general unrest and defeat Don Esteban's troops. The dictator was removed from power, and Barón Maximiliano was established as the leader of Almarrón. Don Esteban still lives. He still tries to sway people by claiming to be a commoner who kept the state out of the hands of the nobility. However, Maximiliano is a just ruler, and the people are ready to give the nobility another chance.

The People

Almarrón is a nation of humans though a few families of demihumans are scattered across the state. The people of Almarrón are tired of war and poverty. Many remember the nation's old democracy as a time of trouble; these would rather avoid politics and allow their noble baron to lead.

However, the older inhabitants have lived under several political systems, and in the democracy they were free; they have not forgotten that heady feeling. Under Don Esteban, they lost much of their freedom, and that chafed—to the point of revolution. Now, these older citizens have a strong desire to remain free. Having experienced the upheavals of the past, they know they can survive them if they must. Fortunately, the new baron respects their viewpoint.

As a result of its history, Almarrón has no true peasants and only one noble family. Most common people are merchants and farmers, with the baron encouraging the establishment of a "class" of craftspeople. Those interested in adventuring are mostly warriors—though rogues, wizards, and priests also take up the lifestyle.

As one might expect of a freedom-loving people, many Swashbucklers live among the Almarróñans. They also have a high number of Local Heroes, many of whom helped overthrow the dictator and have moved on to adventuring careers. Honorbound, Gauchos, and Scouts are encountered with some regularity in Almarrón as well.

The Red Curse

The worst effects of the Red Curse are not prevalent in Almarrón. One of the ways Don Maximiliano won support was by distributing *cinnabryl* to the people. The baron has used the captured treasure hoard of Don Esteban to purchase this protective metal.

Most people of Almarrón choose to not think about the Red Curse; they dismiss it as something that harms others. The few Afflicted who do live in Almarrón stay with their families and friends and are not judged harshly simply because of deformities.

Industry and Trade

Almarrón conducts most of its trade by land, and Gargoña is a favored trading partner. Vilaverde's merchant ships carry many goods from Almarrón. A small number of ships fly Almarróñan colors.

Almarrón's main imports are food from Saragón and *cinnabryl* from Vilaverde. The state's primary exports are silver, tobacco, and coffee. Most of the nation's coffee is exported to Hule and Yavdlom by Vilaverdan ships. Since the baron started encouraging crafts, Almarrón is beginning to export a few fine, finished goods such as furniture, clothing, and jewelry.

Religion

As is the case in most baronies, religion is not terribly important in Almarrón. The Ambassador is venerated by a majority of the citizens, but Milan and Valerias are also popular, especially among Swashbucklers and other adventurers. Veterans of the revolt that overthrew Don Esteban favor the General; the Judge receives attention from those whom Don Esteban's rule oppressed.

The Ruler

Barón Maximiliano de Almarrón y Escudor, a human Noble fighter, is an intelligent and a charismatic leader. The baron is not quite 30 years old, born just after his father was removed from power. His pride tempered by exile, the baron spent his early years in Saragón, returning to Almarrón a decade ago to lead freedom fighters against the dictator.

Don Maximiliano is best described as an enlightened despot, ruling with a firm hand, but so far

avoiding the pitfall of overtaxation. He allows a fair amount of freedom and diversity among his people. Though Don Maximiliano hopes to capture Don Esteban and bring him to trial, most of his troops are tied up guarding urban areas, trails, the silver mines, and the Castle of Tordegena that wards the nation's western border against Yazi gnoll raids. Fortunately, Don Esteban has been unsuccessful finding support for a counter-revolt—for now.

The baron is friends with Don Luis de Manzanas, an important noble and Inheritor in Saragón. This, and his familiarity with the state, has helped the baron establish good relations with Saragón. Don Maximiliano has also cultivated the friendship of Doña Esperanza, ruler of Gargoña, who regrets not having another daughter for the baron to marry. Don Maximiliano is looking for an intelligent and beautiful wife so he can leave strong, capable heirs to care for Almarrón after his death.

The Capital

Ciudad Tejillas, a town of 4,200, is located at the mouth of the river that runs through northern Almarrón. The capital is a center for commerce and has a fine fishing fleet. Don Maximiliano encourages regular celebrations commemorating important events, which raises morale in the city. Ciudad Tejillas is a lively place once more, filled with fine taverns and inns and even sporting a theater and a museum. Though the people of the capital are hard workers, the boisterous enthusiasm of both local and visiting Swashbucklers makes for an exciting nightlife. Still, the town is fairly safe; the adventurers who live in Ciudad Tejillas are protective of its people and its reputation.

Other Places of Interest

There are two large villages in Almarrón: Costella, a farming village that also engages in forestry and supports the silver mines in Sierra del Plata; and Paso Dorado, a trading, farming, and fishing center located upriver from Ciudad Tejillas. Castillo de Tordegena, on Almarrón's western border, was once a proud castle vital to Almarrón's defense. Almost destroyed by Yazi gnolls during the recent wars, Tordegena has still not been restored for habitation. A small garrison camps nearby, occasionally picking through the ruins to roust whatever has taken up residence there. However, the baron would like to find an experienced group of dungeon explorers willing to enter the castle and its many underground levels to determine whether it is worth rebuilding and clear out whatever vermin have taken up residence in the last couple of years.

Baronía de Saragón

Saragón has quite a reputation among the Savage Baronies and along the entire Savage Coast. First, it is known as a haven for sages, scientists, wizards, and other scholars. Second, Inheritors initially came to prominence in Saragón, and the state is still home to many—including the leader of the Crimson Inheritors, Audra the Masked. Third, Saragón is the buffer that protects many of the coastal nations from the Yazak goblinoids; this is partially due to the *careta de la barrera*, the *barrier mask*, a magical item fully described in the adventure "Divided We Fall" later in this book.

History is a favorite topic of study among the proud, able folk of Saragón. They make good leaders because they are schooled in strategy, tactics, and military history. Many noted adventurers hail from Saragón.

The Nation

When most people picture Saragón, they think of the fertile, river valley farmland of Río Maldito and Río Copos. However, the barony also encompasses wide grasslands ranged by cattle and deep woods —including part of Bosque de las Sombras, the Forest of Phantoms. Saragón is very flat, mostly rolling prairieland with just a few hills in the east.

The first Ispan settlers in this region were cattle herders who formed the Barony of Montejo in 909 and built Las Manadas as their capital. Six years later, other colonists founded the State of Aranjuez, claiming the land around what would come to be known as Río Maldito, the Cursed River. The people of Aranjuez were from distant Ylaruam, a land of genies and desert riders.

Both settler groups soon discovered they were not the first occupants of the region. Each encountered human natives of primarily Oltec descent with a heavy admixture of Nithian blood. These natives had not merely intermarried with Nithians but had learned their philosophy and arts as well, retaining the culture even after the Nithians were eradicated. Ispan and Ylari settlers, in turn, intermarried freely with these natives, giving rise to a dark-skinned people with an intriguing philosophical mix.

Both Montejo and Aranjuez were peaceful states. Commerce between them began early between them, they cooperated for defense, and their people mingled. In 962, Yazi gnolls attacked Montejo and Aranjuez, and the two baronies worked together to defeat the invasion. The humans met the gnolls in the forest west of their baronies, their battle ranging through hundreds of square miles of woodland. Eventually the humans defeated the gnolls, but so many lives were lost that the river

draining through the forest ran with blood. These reddened waters earned the river its nickname Río Maldito, the Cursed River, a name that eventually stuck and became official. Similarly, the forest became known as Bosque de las Sombras, the Forest of Phantoms, in memory of the people who died there.

After the battle, Montejo and Aranjuez began serious diplomatic talks that resulted in their merger, in 966, into the Barony of Saragón. Saragón has been reasonably peaceful since then, allowing its sages and scientists to flourish. However, peace has been punctuated by conflict: Saragón and Guadalante disagreed over watering rights for cattle, leading to the Battle of Cortesillas in 992 in which Gauchos of the two nations met on the plains near Las Manadas. Despite great losses, no clear winner emerged. Fortunately, the two nations settled their dispute diplomatically with the Treaty of Cortesillas soon after. Not long after this, some brave adventurers discovered the *careta de la barrera*, a magical mask which has helped Saragón protect its borders ever since by repelling invaders.

Saragón was able to remain at peace until the recent wars, at which time it joined the southern baronies in an alliance against Narvaez. After Gargoña negotiated an end to those hostilities, Saragón helped the baronies fight Hule and aided in defense against the Yazi and Yazak goblinoids.

In 1007, several Yazi gnoll tribes gathered together to attack the baronies. They moved along the western borders of Almarrón and Gargoña, destroying Castillo de Tordegena in Almarrón and Castillo de Pardalupe in Gargoña. Saragón was unable to muster forces in time to help the defenders of those castles, but managed to lure the gnolls into Saragón. Because they wanted to defeat the gnolls, not simply chase them away or drive them back into Almarrón and Gargoña, the Saragóners forsook the protection of the *careta de la barrera*. Under the leadership of Don Claudio de Tolón (baronet of Montejo) and Don Luis de Manzanas (baronet of Aranjuez), Saragóner troops soundly defeated the gnolls at the Battle of Morrión. They were aided by Sir John of Cimmaron, who led unexpected cavalry reinforcements into the battle at a critical time.

Yazak goblinoids attacked throughout the baronies over the next two years, but were unable to get into Saragón (or through to Almarrón or Gargoña) because the *careta de la barrera* was once again in place. Unfortunately, when magic failed for a week in 1009, so did the magical mask; some patient goblinoids who had stayed in the area chose that time to attack Torre de Manzanas while Don Luis was at the capital, almost demolishing it. The baronet spent the next few months reclaiming, cleaning, rebuilding, and expanding his tower. The restoration ended only recently, and Don Luis commemorated the opening of his new castle with a celebration.

Saragón has a fair militia and can also call upon its Gauchos for defense in times of trouble. Saragón hires Torreóner mercenary lancers to patrol the borders and take care of small groups of intruders, especially Yazi gnolls who sometimes raid the fertile Río Copos region. In addition to soldiers, Saragón also has the *barrier mask*, which can strike fear into any force of more than 100 hostile intruders who cross the border intending to do harm. The device has twice prevented armies from Narvaez from invading Saragón. This is fortunate because Los Matónes of Narvaez would certainly create havoc in Saragón.

The People

As in Gargoña, though the great majority of Saragóners are human, all races are accepted. Families of many diverse backgrounds live in Saragón. Human Saragóners are generally browner-skinned than humans of other baronies because of their more extensive intermingling with native populations. Beyond this, two distinct skin-tones exist within the state: medium-dark families of primarily Ispan descent, found in the barony's southern areas; and darker-skinned folk of Ylari descent, most of whom live in northern Saragón. This racial mix, the tolerance of Saragóners, and their love for wizardry all serve to irritate the more zealous among Narvaezans, who would love to bring their Inquisition to Saragón.

The people of Saragón tend to be quick-witted and fiery of temperament; however, their Ylari background and the influence of the long-dead Nithians give them tolerance of others and a reverence for scholarship and storytelling. Saragóners are also insatiably curious about their world and the myriad things in it; they seek to analyze, learn, and understand. Their culture has given rise to countless astronomers and mathematicians. Many Saragóners follow the path to arcane knowledge, becoming wizards or alchemists.

Adventurers are more common in Saragón than in most of the baronies. Besides wizards, both warriors (especially rangers) and rogues are also common; priests are less likely, but some druids study in Saragón. Saragón is where the first vial of *crimson essence* was created, so it was home to the first Inheritors, many still living here. As Saragón is the only Enlightened State with a large nobility, the Noble kit is often used here as well. There are also Swashbucklers, Local Heroes, Gauchos, Honorbound, Defenders, and Scouts. Wizards become both Militants and Mystics, and clerics are usually War Priests or Local Heroes. The 12th-level druid for the Savage Baronies, a human named Kalil, lives in Bosque de las Sombras, often attended by other druids. A few Myrmidons also hail from Saragón.

The Red Curse
Just over a decade ago, Luis (then heir to the title of baronet of Manzanas) led an adventuring group that uncovered a prophecy about power to be derived from the Red Curse. The group of adventurers paid a Saragóner alchemist to produce a potion that would allow them to manipulate the Legacies of the Red Curse. For a rather high fee, the alchemist concocted the first vials of *crimson essence*; he then sold the formula to the adventurers for another large sum.

While the potion was being readied, these 11 adventurers trained themselves to accept the power of the Red Curse, and when they imbibed the *crimson essence*, they became the first Inheritors. Eventually, the group split up because of differing philosophies. Some belonged to the Brotherhood of Order, while others held memberships in the Friends of Freedom. When Inheritors began to rise to importance in both groups, others, including Luis, joined the Neutral Alliance to balance things out. Eventually, Inheritors came to take over all three groups, which two years ago became the three Orders of the Inheritors: the Orders of the Ruby, Crimson, and Flame.

Because Inheritors have existed in Saragón longer than anywhere else, both *cinnabryl* and *red steel* are common in Saragón. Most *cinnabryl* is imported through the Inheritor network outside of normal trade routes, but it is rumored that a secret *cinnabryl* mine exists in Saragón, possibly deep beneath Torre de Manzanas. *Red steel* is mostly gathered by Inheritors.

While *cinnabryl* is relatively common in Saragón and is distributed fairly to those who need it, Inheritors encourage the use of *maintain* spells for most people to reduce dependency on *cinnabryl*. This policy is effective because Saragóner Inheritors take pains to explain to people exactly what *cinnabryl* does and why it is better for many of them to never use *cinnabryl*, rather than use it and risk running out.

The people of Saragón are well-educated about the curse and even most children understand its effects. Instead of a cause for fear, the Red Curse is an object of study in Saragón. Afflicted are rare here, and those Afflicted who live in Saragón are readily accepted by their families and friends.

Industry and Trade
While Inheritors carry on a brisk trade in *cinnabryl* and *red steel*, this exchange takes place outside of normal commercial channels and does not count toward the barony's exports and imports.

Saragón's primary export is knowledge. The state's sages and scholars answer questions for visitors and, via letters, for all nations of the Savage Coast. Consultations carry a fee, and those fees are taxed, enriching the nation. Saragón is largely self-sufficient and imports little, though artwork from Gargoña and crafts from Almarrón are both popular. Saragón usually trades food to those states in return, also supplying some food to Cimmaron as well.

Religion
While few people of Saragón are truly religious, all the Immortals typical in the baronies are revered here. The Ambassador, the General, the Judge, Milan, and Valerias, receive about equal respect. The Ylari Immortal Al-Kalim is also popular in Saragón, and his high regard for scholarship has helped lead Saragóners to their present cultural level.

The Ruler
The leader of Saragón is Barón Balthazar de Montejo y Aranjuez. The baron is a human Noble and an experienced wizard. Barón Balthazar has ruled the barony for almost 20 years and is nearly 80 years old. He is a wise ruler who encourages freedom of thought and equality among his people. He has followed the path of Saragón's previous rulers to make his barony prosperous and peaceful while still maintaining its ability to defend itself from attackers.

Saragón has an unusual style of government. Its baron is advised by a triumvirate: the baronets of Montejo, Aranjuez, and Saragón. The baron meets regularly with his advisers. The baronets and other nobles (or their representatives) also meet once a month in Ciudad Matacán, where they establish policy for the realm. Unlike leaders of other baronies, the baron of Saragón is obligated to follow rulings of the Parliament of Lords. While the baron can (and does) make day-to-day policy decisions, these can be overturned by Parliament. To preserve the unity of the government, however, the baron considers his options carefully before making decisions, and Parliament deliberates before overturning them.

Parliament also ratifies inheritances, deciding whether the child of a noble is truly worthy of a title before passing it on (material inheritances are not the concern of Parliament). Likewise, a member of Parliament can nominate a commoner to join the ranks of the nobility; a nominee must receive a two-thirds vote of Parliament to be accepted (at which time the new noble must begin attending Parliament or send someone as a representative).

The speaker of Parliament is the baronet of Saragón, currently Doña Angelíta de Matacán. If she is unable to attend, her duties can be filled by one of the two other baronets, the baronet of Montejo (currently Don Claudio de Tolón) and the baronet of Aranjuez (currently Don Luis de Manzanas).

When a baron dies, Parliament chooses a replacement from among the three baronets. When a baronet dies or is promoted, a potential replacement is nominated by the baron, and must be approved by a simple majority of Parliament. The baronet titles are tied to regions, not specific locations: Aranjuez must come from the north, Montejo from the south, and Saragón from the center.

The baron of Saragón assumes the titles "of Montejo and of Aranjuez" regardless of his previous residence, to represent the unity of the state. Doña Angelíta is favored to become the next leader of Saragón though Don Luis has support as well; most members of Parliament consider Don Claudio too young and inexperienced. As previously noted, Don Luis is an Inheritor, one of the first; many members of Parliament feel this potential conflict of interest makes Don Luis unsuitable for the post of baron.

Note that an important rival and enemy of Don Luis is a former Inheritor named Balazar—not to be confused with Barón Balthazar, who is a close friend. Both Don Luis and Balazar are thoroughly described in the adventure "Divided We Fall."

The Capital

Most of Ciudad Matacán's 6,600 population is human, but members of all SAVAGE COAST races reside here. The capital is a safe town, quiet during the day. However, Ciudad Matacán boasts a university and several schools whose students tend to get a little boisterous after sunset. Most inhabitants of the capital are scholars of one kind or another, though merchants and adventurers are common as well.

Other Places of Interest

Except for the capital, the only settlement in Saragón larger than 100 people is the village of Las Manadas, a center for about 900 farmers and Gauchos. Pazo del Rey, another village in Saragón, had a population close to 300 before it was razed by a small force of Afflicted Torreóner mercenaries four years ago at the behest of Narvaez.

Other prominent sites of Saragón include Torre de Manzanas (actually a castle owned by Don Luis, baronet of Aranjuez) and Torre de Tolón (a tower that serves as home to Don Claudio, baronet of Montejo). Both fortresses are important to the defense of Saragón, and their lords are often (as now) nominees for the baronet positions. Barón Balthazar was once lord of Torre de Tolón and is Don Claudio's granduncle.

The battle sites of Saragón are also worth note. The largest is certainly Bosque de las Sombras, the Forest of Phantoms, said to be haunted by those who died in 963 when humans from Saragón and Aranjuez united to defeat raiding Yazi gnolls. Another marks the Battle of Morrión, where Saragón avenged Almarrón and Gargoña by slaying the Yazi gnolls who had destroyed Almarrón's Castillo de Tordegena and Gargoña's Castillo de Pardalupe. A much smaller site is the Battle of Cortesillas, where Gauchos from Guadalante and Saragón met over water rights.

Guadalante and Cimmaron

South and west of the Enlightened Lands are two states whose spirited people are known for their love of open expanses, horses, and pistols. I write, of course, of Cimmaron and Guadalante, two states whose main concerns lie with the land. These people are explorers at heart, interested in any exciting endeavor. They would make fine additions to any quest which could hold their interest, and the quest to end the Red Curse is certainly one which would do so. However, those most affected by the Red Curse, the Afflicted, tend to separate themselves from other people and from life in general.

—*The Chronicle of the Curse*
by Don Luis de Manzanas

The cultures which have risen in these two states create an atmosphere unique in the Savage Baronies. Though they have the same fiery temperaments as the other Guardianos, the people of Guadalante and Cimmaron apply their passions in different ways.

Sometimes known as the Lands of the Gauchos, Guadalante and Cimmaron are concerned much more with the land than the sea. Instead of smooth, swashbuckling rogues, these two states have rough, range-riding warriors. The frontier feel is much more prominent in these two states than elsewhere in the Savage Baronies; the people are a little rougher, and perhaps a little tougher, than the dandies and courtiers of the other baronies.

While Vilaverde and Texeiras have the strongest navies and Narvaez and Torreón have the strongest infantries, Guadalante and Cimmaron have the most impressive horsemen. The gauchos of the plains, brought together to fight for their freedom, make formidable light cavalry units.

In addition, Cimmaron is the home of *smokepowder* and wheellock pistols; Guadalante has made extensive use of these items as well, trading grazing rights to Cimmaron in exchange for weapons. While wheellocks are popular with many Swashbucklers, they are required equipment among Gauchos. Almost every warrior of the two small states knows how to use a *smokepowder* weapon. In Cimmaron and Guadalante, a belt pistol is the preferred personal defense for many people.

The omnipresence of firearms also influences dueling styles in these two states. While *smokepowder* weapons are occasionally used for duels in other baronies, duelists of Guadalante and Cimmaron have become famous for their skills. Other baronies may prefer the sword for its elegance, but firearms are the weapons of choice here.

Personal bravery and honor are very important to the people of these lands. Guadalantans and Cimmarons pride themselves on their willingness to fight for what they believe in. They are proud of their heritage of freedom. Neither barony has ever fought to conquer another land; to enforce their will upon others would be the height of hypocrisy for those who love freedom so well.

Guadalante and Cimmaron would be likely to unify if either state saw any need for it. Their ideals are comparable, their people similar, and their governments are friendly to one another. However, both nations are fiercely independent and proud; both feel they are doing fine as they are.

Estado de Guadalante

Guadalante is the most loosely organized of the Savage Baronies. It has only two real population centers, and encompasses mostly open grassland, with a few haciendas and camps scattered across the countryside. Baronials outside of Guadalante and Cimmaron tend to think of Guadalante less as a nation and more as a large ranch. This attitude is irrevocably altered in those people who attempt to attack Guadalante or trespass on its lands; the Gauchos of Guadalante are fiercely proud of their nation, doing all they can to maintain its rights and power.

Most Guardianos picture Guadalantans as crude ruffians with no appreciation for the finer things in life. For the most part, they are correct; the typical Guadalantan would rather sleep under the stars than in a bed.

The Nation

Fertile farmland along the banks of the Río Copos and Río Negro relieves the monotonous expanses of Guadalantan grasslands. Guadalante also claims a small portion of the Sierra Desperada hills on its southern border.

The barony has had a relatively peaceful history, at least in regard to the other baronies. Guadalante was founded in 985 when the States of Copetez and Bigotillos were united through the marriage of their heirs. Copetez had been founded around Ciudad Huelca in 908, and Bigotillos was established north of Río Copos in 947. The two states seldom quarreled because there was enough

rangeland to go around. The rulers of the two states often communicated, and their children's match was one of love. When Maria of Copetez married Guillermo of Bigotillos, their parents happily relinquished control of the entire united domain to the newlyweds. The two ruled together, and when Guillermo died, Maria passed the domain on to her son Dante and his wife. Guadalante has been ruled by a married couple ever since.

Except for periodic troubles with Yazak goblinoids to the north and Yazi gnolls to the southeast, Guadalante has had few conflicts. One such was a disagreement with Saragón over watering rights. This argument came to a head at the Battle of Cortesillas but was soon solved with the Treaty of Cortesillas. The only other conflict Guadalante has had with another barony occurred just four years ago when Guadalante allied with the other southern baronies to resist the depredations of Narvaez and its allies. Guadalantan Gauchos proved the effectiveness of cavalry against ground troops in the few battles fought between the baronies before Hule's invasion united them all.

The People

Nearly all Guadalantans are human, but a few demihumans live within the nation's borders. Tortle peasants occasionally work on the haciendas, but lupins and rakastas are not welcome in Guadalante because they tend to spook horses. Goblinoids are discouraged as residents, but peaceable merchants occasionally visit for trade. Few lizard kin have ever strayed into Guadalante, and the Guadalantans find them fascinating when they do visit.

Guadalante is home of the Gauchos, free-spirited wanderers of the pampas. Gauchos can be recognized easily by their calf-high boots, puffy pants, ample shirts, and broad hats. Seldom wearing armor, these range-riders are almost always armed and usually carry at least a dagger and a wheellock pistol; bolas, javelins, and lances are common as well. In peacetime, most Gauchos raise cattle and live in the pampas in large, fortified haciendas.

Guadalante has a higher proportion of adventurers than most of the other baronies. Most of these are warriors, a few rogues, wizards, and priests leaven the mix. The most common kit in Guadalante is, of course, the Gaucho. Local Heroes, Honorbound, and Nobles are somewhat common, but Swashbucklers, Myrmidons, and Defenders are rare in Guadalante. Those Defenders who do live in Guadalante are usually devoted to the General, though Valerias is quite popular as well. Most Guadalantan wizards are Militants, and the clerics are usually War Priests. Both the Scout and the Bandit are popular among Guadalantan rogues.

The Red Curse

Guadalante gets most of its *cinnabryl* from Cimmaron but imports barely enough for the nobility, wealthy merchants, and adventurers. Most common folk rely on *maintain* spells from local clergy, but many still become Afflicted. As in the majority of the Savage Baronies, Afflicted are shunned in Guadalante. However, since the nation is wide open, the Afflicted can find plenty of places where "normal" people are miles away. Several haciendas in Guadalante are run entirely by Afflicted. Those Guadalantans unaffected by the detriments of the Red Curse tend to ignore it; many look upon the Afflicted as something less than human.

Industry and Trade

Though some *red steel* and *cinnabryl* are imported into Guadalante, the barony's major import is *smokepowder*. All these substances are obtained from Cimmaron, Guadalante's main trading partner. The landlocked nation also deals with Saragón, mostly for finished goods, and occasional trading takes place between Guadalante and Robrenn, especially for the lumber with which wealthy Guadalantans build their homes (poor inhabitants build their houses of mud bricks). Some weapons from Renardy and Bellayne are also imported.

Guadalante's only major exports are horses and beef. Most of this goes to the other baronies, but some is sent to Robrenn, Renardy, and Bellayne.

Religion

Guadalantans care little for religion as a rule. Valerias and the General are the most popular, and the Judge is somewhat respected. Considered weak by Guadalantans, Milan and the Ambassador receive little attention.

The Ruler

Guadalante is an oligarchy ruled by the prominent cattle-trading families. These are Guadalante's nobility—perhaps a bit rougher than most, but nobles nonetheless. The current rulers of Guadalante are Don Crístobal "El Barbudo" de Bigotillos y Copetez and his wife, Doña Catalina de Bigotillos y Narvaez, the daughter of Barón Hugo of Narvaez. Don Crístobal "The Bearded" is a rather peaceful if boisterous ex-adventurer. Though a member of the nobility and possessed with the gaucho spirit, Don Crístobal grew up among common folk and is a ranger with the Local Hero kit.

Despite Don Crístobal's apparent roughness from his years in the pampas—his style, extravagance, sense of humor, and appreciation of all that is refined in life have charmed more than one señorita during his visits to other baronies. He met Doña Catalina while he was in Narvaez during the recent wars, not long after he helped ravage Ciudad Quimeras. Despite Don Crístobal's actions, Doña Catalina became smitten with the noble gaucho and secretly married him, without Barón Hugo's knowledge or approval. Barón Hugo was not happy about the marriage. Viewing Crístobal as a *pechero* (commoner), he refused to send a dowry. In contrast, Don Crístobal's parents were pleased with their son's activities during the war, and after he was married, abdicated in favor of Crístobal and Catalina.

After some brief difficulties with Saragón and despite the friction with Narvaez, Guadalante is at relative peace with the Savage Baronies. This leaves Yazi and Yazak incursions as Don Crístobal's main concerns. However, the Gauchos are more than willing to defend their land. Armed with wheellocks and lances, they are well suited to combat in the vast grasslands. They are the most mobile military force in the baronies.

The Capital

Ciudad Huelca's population of 6,300 comprises mostly farmers, merchants, crafters, and laborers. It is a sleepy town—during the daytime at least. In the evenings when the Gauchos ride in (especially nights when cattle drives end at the capital) the town becomes a veritable maelstrom of activity, with business roaring in the taverns and more than a few fights breaking out. Most merchants and crafters lock up their storefronts—and their sons and daughters—and wait for the town to return to normal again when the sun rises.

Other Places of Interest

Guadalante has only one other major settlement—the village of Dos Cabezas Hacienda, built up around a large manor owned by one of the noble families. The village has a population of more than 300 peasant farmers, but it is known more as a gathering place for the Gauchos of southern Guadalante. As in Ciudad Huelca, Dos Cabezas Hacienda is usually quiet, but the atmosphere becomes decidedly more rowdy when Gauchos or Bandits ride into town. Duels, fistfights, and public drunkenness are more common here than in Ciudad Huelca, and only the law enforcement specialists (mostly Honorbound sponsored by the local nobles) keep things from falling into complete anarchy.

The majority of Guadalante's population lives in fortified haciendas scattered across the grasslands, and the rest are nomads who camp wherever they end their day. Any hacienda worthy of the name supports between 20 and 50 permanent residents and might have as many as 20 range riders.

Cimmaron County

Unusual in many ways and culturally dissimilar to the other Savage Baronies, Cimmaron does share a few characteristics with Guadalante. Cimmaron's state language is common, and while people in most other baronies speak common and either Espa or Verdan, only about one-third of Cimmarons speak a language other than common (usually Espa). All Cimmaron place names are now rendered in common.

Besides the language difference, Cimmarons have distinctive views and habits that set them apart from other Baronials. Their leader prefers the title Count over Baron (though his people have begun to refer to him as a duke), and the state is called a county. Cimmaron is where *smokepowder* and firearms were developed on the Savage Coast; the people of Cimmaron have a fondness for wheellock pistols and prefer them above all other weapons for dueling. The people of Cimmaron dress differently, preferring suedes and leathers and tending toward darker, rougher, heavier clothing than that found elsewhere in the baronies. Cimmarons are rarely seafarers, even though theirs is a coastal state. While most Baronials are tough, many are light-spirited as well; this is not true in Cimmaron, where the toughness of the people has a cold edge to it. Finally, Cimmaron *feels* like an uncivilized frontier, a place where people are trying to tame an unruly wilderness and the hostile natives who live there.

Most other Guardianos avoid Cimmaron as too uncivilized a place. This suits Cimmarons just fine because they tend to view the other Baronials (except for Guadalantans, whom they respect) as pampered dandies.

The Nation

Cimmaron is blessed with a good mix of terrain types, from grasslands and farmlands to forests and hills. The soil here is not as fertile as in the other baronies, and Cimmaron tends to appear dry and inhospitable. Those plants that do grow in Cimmaron seem stunted to the eastern eye, and the animals of Cimmaron are skinny compared to specimens found in the other Savage Baronies.

The first modern colonists to come to the Claw Peninsula actually arrived a couple of years before the Ispan wave. These colonists were members of the Brotherhood of Order (also known as the Lawful Brotherhood), the philosophical "ancestors" of the Inheritors of the Order of the Ruby. The Brotherhood originated in the City-States on the other side of the Gulf of Hule. Its colonists located the first Brotherhood outpost at the present site of Old Fort, at the tip of the peninsula.

These colonists were soon followed by shiploads of adventurers from many different parts of the world, particularly Ispans. The first Ispan settlement, then in the lands claimed by Narvaez, was Nueva Esperanza (New Hope), which eventually became known as Smokestone City.Nueva Esperanza declared independence three years after the founding of Narvaez and was allowed to secede without a fight. The people of Nueva Esperanza got to know those of the Brotherhood, and they began a peaceful trading relationship. They also signed a mutual defense pact, and soon Lawful Brotherhood trading posts, defended by Nueva Esperanzan warriors, appeared along the coast. Occasional influxes of colonists from the City-States, and of disaffected Baronials from the north, caused rapid growth along the Savage Coast. Native tortles and dwarves, and a few halfling settlers from far to the east, also joined this odd alliance.

The State of Almarrón was founded in 936; it grew out of the southern remnants of the Barony of Sotto, which was conquered by Gargoña that year. Almarrón needed something to unite its people, so it decided to give them a common enemy in the people of Nueva Esperanza and the surrounding territory. Almarrón's leaders rallied their people by characterizing the colonists from the City-States as undesirable *gringos*. To "claim the land for the Espan people," Almarrón attacked Nueva Esperanza in 939 and quickly took over the entire Claw Peninsula. Some of the Brotherhood of Order went into hiding, while a small sect became the LB Trading Company and maintained many of the group's trading posts.

A *cinnabryl* mine had been discovered near Nueva Esperanza a few years before Almarrón's conquest; the inhabitants told the Almarróñans that the unusual metal was worthless and poisonous. Thus, the mine was mostly ignored by the conquerors. In 948, a group of dwarves working in the mine began experimenting with *steel seed* and developed *smokepowder*; again, the secret was kept from the Almarróñans and remained with a single dwarven family, the Smithy clan.

These dwarven smiths, in their quest for a good use for *smokepowder*, invented the arquebus in 957. This time, the secret got out to the Almarróñans, but they ignored the "toy" because of its dangers and inaccuracy, preferring to stay with swords. *Smokepowder* weapons were mostly forgotten, but a young Smithy became enthused about the project almost 15 years later, and with the help of a halfling jeweler named Westron, developed a wheellock pistol in 975.

They demonstrated their weapon to a man named Cimmaron, one of the leaders of a growing movement to throw the Almarróñans out of Nueva Esperanza, who encouraged its secret production. Many of these weapons were produced over the next couple of years, and *smokepowder* was stockpiled as well.

In 977, Almarrón conquered the tiny state of Escudor and then initiated hostilities with Gargoña and Rivera to the north. This was the opportunity Cimmaron and other leaders had been waiting for, and they began a rebellion against Almarrón in 978. Cimmaron's unit, most armed with wheellock pistols, made quite an impression on the Almarróñan soldiers, routing many of them. In 979, Almarrón ceased its war with Gargoña and turned its full attention to the rebels. Many insurgents lost their lives during a disastrous battle at Old Fort, the site of the original Lawful Brotherhood trading post, after refusing to yield to vastly superior Almarróñan forces.

However, in 980, the self-appointed General Cimmaron led his soldiers to many small victories. His major victory came at the Battle of Hondo, when Cimmaron led his last soldiers in a desperate charge to break the Almarróñan ranks, carrying a wheellock pistol and a *red steel* sword and rallying his troops with the cry "Remember the Old Fort!" The defeated Almarróñans left the area, and Cimmaron's followers promptly declared him Earl and named the newly-freed region Cimmaron. Nueva Esperanza was renamed Smokestone City to further break from old Ispan ways and became the capital of independent Cimmaron County.

Old General Cimmaron died in 1008 fighting Yazi goblins from the Badlands at the battle known as Longhorn's Last Stand. He was succeeded by his son, John, who is the small nation's current ruler. Except for a minor Tortle Revolt just after he took office and a few problems with Yazi goblinoids, Sir John has had a peaceful two years in charge of Cimmaron.

The People

Cimmaron's population is mostly human, though dwarves are common, and halflings (mostly stouts) are more frequently seen here than elsewhere on the Savage Coast. Like other Baronials, Cimmarons are independent, self-sufficient, and proud; like Guadalantans, they are rough, fond of firearms, and comfortable on horseback. However, the similarities end there. The people of Cimmaron tend to be tougher and cruder than those in the other Savage Baronies.

Adventurers are more common here than in any other barony. Warriors, especially rangers and paladins, are likely to be encountered in Cimmaron more so than in any other barony. The most

common warrior kits found here are Gauchos, Honorbound (duelists), and Local Heroes—though Defenders, Nobles, and Myrmidons are sometimes seen. The Swashbuckler mentality is not present in Cimmaron, and native Swashbucklers are rare indeed, found mostly among those Cimmarons who choose a life at sea.

Rogues are also found in Cimmaron, most with the Scout or Bandit kit, though a few Local Heroes and Nobles also live here. Bards with the Local Hero kit travel the countryside, stopping in small hamlets to entertain with their guitars in return for a meal and a place to sleep.

Some wizards and priests live in Cimmaron, the vast majority with the Local Hero kit. A few are War Priests and Militant wizards. Multiclass dwarves and dual-class humans, usually a warrior class combined with something else, pop up more here than most places.

Many citizens in Cimmaron, not just warriors, carry firearms. Most are wheellocks, some new, some handed down from a parent or other relative who fought in the war for independence. Occasionally an old arquebus is handed down from long ago.

Because of the proliferation of *smokepowder* weapons in Cimmaron, Inheritors of any type are rare in the barony. Inheritors occasionally visit to engage in trade for *cinnabryl*, *red steel*, or even *smokepowder*. A few especially brave Inheritors live in Cimmaron, but they avoid the public. An Inheritor would be foolish to take part in a firearm duel, but still risks being branded a coward for rejecting such a challenge.

The Red Curse

The Red Curse has long been known in Cimmaron, and is an accepted part of life. *Cinnabryl*, *steel seed*, and *smokepowder* were all discovered or developed here and are readily embraced. Cimmarons understand the Red Curse as well as anybody and recognize its progress.

Since *cinnabryl* was once discarded after depletion, small stocks of *red steel* lie around in unexpected places. Also, while *cinnabryl* is common in Cimmaron, the metal does not always make it into the hands of peasants. Though local clerics use *maintain* spells to protect their flocks, Afflicted still exist in Cimmaron. Most are peasants, so they are routinely ignored anyway by members of the upper classes. Afflicted here, as in some of the other baronies, remove themselves to small enclaves to spare their friends and families the burden of taking care of them.

Industry and Trade

Cimmaron's main home industries include taverns (usually called saloons in Cimmaron) and gambling. The state depends on revenues from these endeavors instead of heavier taxation, still pulling in a good amount of money. Even better, collecting revenue from saloons and gambling halls means the tax burden is shared by visitors to the small nation as well as natives. Smokestone City features a huge tavern and gambling hall called the Red Steel Saloon.

Smokestone City takes its name from the deposits of coal nearby; the coal mines produce fuel to heat the many forges of Cimarron and provide a valuable export. Thanks to the county's strong dwarven tradition, Cimmaron's forges turn out weapons and basic metal implements; many of these are also exported.

The nation's large *cinnabryl* mine is located near the village of South Gulch. A smaller operation near Smokestone City does not produce enough metal to be called a *cinnabryl* mine. Its mother lode is *steel seed*, used to make *smokepowder*. Cimmaron exports great quantities of *cinnabryl*, *smokepowder*, and *red steel*.

Cinnabryl is shipped to several other baronies, especially to Texeiras and Vilaverde, for transport to other states. Through the Sea Powers, Cimmaron is the largest exporter of *cinnabryl* to the nations of the central Savage Coast: Eusdria, Renardy, and Bellayne. Cimmaron also imports some *cinnabryl* from Slagovich in return for *red steel*. The Sea Powers buy *smokepowder* from Cimmaron, but exports of the explosive also go to Torreón, Renardy, Almarrón, Gargoña, and Saragón. Note that Renardy sends some of its *smokepowder* on to Torreón, and Gargoña trades some with both Torreón and Narvaez. Cimmaron imports food in return for some of its *smokepowder*.

Most of Cimmaron's trading takes place by overland routes through the LB Trading Company, now a powerful commercial enterprise based in Smokestone City. The company's traditional concerns include exploration, mining, wheellock manufacturing, ale production, and general trading of merchandise in the Gulf of Hule region. Though the LB Trading Company conducts most trade by wagon (Sir John, leader of Cimmaron, once drove for them), it also employs a few small ships. Fortunately, the company's good relationship with Texeiras and Vilaverde (attained through *smokepowder* trade) means the sea wolves have little cause to worry about their ships.

It should be noted that the LB Trading Company has no official relationship with the other descendants of the Lawful Brotherhood, the Inheritors' Order of the Ruby. Still, the two groups are reasonably friendly. It is not unusual to see a Ruby Inheritor guarding an LB Trading Company wagon. In addition, the LB Trading Company helps Inheritors obtain supplies of *cinnabryl* and *red steel*, and (with astute advisers) maintain control over those supplies.

Cimmaron, as a nation, has never commissioned mercenaries from Torreón or Narvaez. On occasion, a landowner or merchant has hired mercenaries to guard possessions, but these sword-

wielding warriors-for-hire are seldom a match for the pistol-toting Bandits, Gauchos, and Honorbound of Cimmaron.

Religion
Religion holds little importance to most Cimmarons, who tend to be irreverent at best. Still, the General is recognized by many as an inspiration to the state's own General Cimmaron. Valerias is respected as a patron by Gauchos, and the Judge is popular among Honorbound. Milan and the Ambassador are barely acknowledged by most Cimmarons.

The Ruler

The present ruler of Cimmaron is Sir John of the Wain, known to his people as the Duke of Cimarron. He is a calm, unwavering paladin and a skilled duelist with the Honorbound kit. A larger-than-life figure, Sir John hardly seems the type to be a head of state. He earned his nickname "of the wain" (or "of the wagon") driving for the LB Trading Company. During his time with the company, Sir John had many adventures, which have become legendary in Cimmaron.

When Sir John's older brother, Patrick, was killed at Ciudad Quimeras during fighting in Narvaez in 1006, John was recalled to Smokestone City to become the official heir and learn all he could of government. Sir John's father, General Cimmaron, died in 1008 at Longhorn's Last Stand, leading his tiny force of Cimmaron irregulars against hordes of Yazi goblins. John became the Earl of Cimmaron in 1008.

Sir John remains fit and active. He is still prompt to lead a posse after a bandit leader or to mount campaigns against Yazi gnolls from El Grande Carrascal in the north and Yazi goblins from the Badlands in the west. He typically dresses in rough canvas trousers, an open cotton shirt, and a wide-brimmed hat. He is seldom seen without his pair of fine wheellock pistols.

Since the death of his father, Sir John has shown a particular hatred of goblins. Over the last two years, he has overseen the construction of Fort Whitestone, strategically placed at the end of the Bugle Trail on the edge of the Badlands. A desolate cavalry outpost, Fort Whitestone sends out regular patrols to look for goblinoid raiders and other drifters and thieves.

Sir John fought at his brother's side in 1006, during the war with Narvaez. He also distinguished himself as a leader at the Battle of Morrión in Saragón in 1007. Since becoming leader of Cimmaron, he has won several significant victories against the Yazi. In response to his heroism, the noble families of Cimmaron recently declared him a duke. This titular elevation is a point of contention with other rulers of the Savage Baronies, who sarcastically refer to Sir John simply as "The Duke," which makes him very uncomfortable. So far, Sir John has been successful at keeping Cimarron a county in title and has never tried to put himself above the other rulers, which has lessened tensions.

Though each noble in Cimarron oversees an estate or settlement of some kind, they have little power outside their own lands. Sir John's word is absolute; he can grant someone a title or remove someone from the nobility. He can open trade relations or end them by declaring war. Recently, Sir John created a national constabulary. Some members are stationed in settlements, others wander the state; all are Honorbound. Constables report directly to Sir John and enforce the laws of Cimmaron, sometimes by arresting perpetrators, sometimes by initiating a duel and ending the criminal's life.

Sir John would like a wife, preferably someone with whom he could discuss decisions important to Cimmaron. A ruggedly handsome man in his late 30s, he is considered by some to be the most eligible man in the baronies.

For now, Sir John's heir is his younger brother, Morris, who has recently been serving as John's ambassador to the other baronies in order to learn about their overall political atmosphere. Sir John's brother also has a son, Marion, a boy being educated in Smokestone City by a tutor from Saragón.

The Capital

Smokestone City has a population of 11,500; roughly half are humans, and perhaps a third are dwarves. Over 1,100 halflings make their home in Smokestone City, as do about half that number tortles. The remaining 2% of the population are elves, lupins, and members of other races found on the Savage Coast.

Because of the smoke generated by the many forges in town, Smokestone is a dark place; soot sifts onto everything, even recently-washed surfaces. The people of Smokestone are friendly in a rough sort of way and always happy to see visitors stop by and sample the local offerings. However, more than one fight has occurred between a tough Cimmaron Gaucho and a flamboyant Vilaverdan Swashbuckler. Fortunately, most sailing ships make port at Old Fort, and Swashbucklers are seldom seen in Smokestone City. The LB Trading Company handles most of the commerce that comes through Smokestone City, including overland and river trade.

This town is known for its rowdy nightlife, which centers around its saloons and gambling halls. The largest and most popular establishment of that sort is the Red Steel Saloon; people claim that a duel occurs in front of the saloon at least once a day.

Other Places of Interest

Aside from the capital, four major settlements can be found in Cimmaron: South Gulch, Little Big Rock, Old Fort, and New Hope Penitentiary. South Gulch is the home base of many *cinnabryl* miners, as well as a few tortle peasants, Bandits, and Gauchos. Little Big Rock is another trading center but is also a farming town and resting place for Gauchos.

Despite their names, Old Fort and New Hope Penitentiary are thriving settlements as well. Old Fort, built on the site of the original Brotherhood of Order outpost, is a military port and houses a garrison of troops. Old Fort is also a central meeting and trading location for the human and tortle farmers in the area. New Hope Penitentiary was built by the Almarróñans and named after the city of Nueva Esperanza, which has since become Smokestone City (the Penitentiary didn't follow suit). Besides a large jail, New Hope Penitentiary also houses many farmers and those support personnel needed to keep the jail functioning.

LB Trading Posts

In addition to their locations inside Cimmaron, LB Trading Posts can be found all across the Savage Coast. In many ways, these locations are considered Cimmaron colonies, though the company is a private enterprise, wholly independent of the government of Cimmaron. Small posts are at various points along the coast, but the LB Trading Company's largest interests are the Free City of Dunwick (south of the eastern tip of Renardy), Richland (located in the far west on the Grass Coast), and the Orc's Head Peninsula.

Dunwick

Dunwick started as an outpost of the Brotherhood of Order, then became a trading post when part of the Brotherhood became the LB Trading Company. Today, the company owns or finances many businesses in Dunwick, a city of about 22,000 people. Slightly more than half of Dunwick's population is tortle, but humans, lupins, rakastas, goblinoids, lizard kin, phanatons, wallaras, and manscorpions also inhabit the area. The trade in Dunwick is lively. Most of the LB Trading Company's holdings employ tortle workers and are protected by Texeiran ships and Torreóner sellswords. Having such a large interest in Dunwick gives the LB Trading Company a fractional cut of Texeiran commerce with Renardy.

Richland

Much smaller than Dunwick, Richland is a town with about 2,300 residents, including humans, tortles, and shazaks. Located north of the Horn across the Trident Bay, Richland is far from the more civilized lands and largely self-sufficient as far as the production of food, weapons, and various other necessities. The LB Trading Company owns most of Richland, and through a deal with Texeiran shipping, uses Richland as a center for gathering exotic goods from the Orc's Head Peninsula. Materials are shipped from Richland to the rest of the Savage Coast for sale, which pleases both the Texeiran merchants and the LB Trading Company. Since Richland is within the Haze lands, it also serves as a residence for those wishing to avoid the effects of the Red Curse.

El Grande Carrascal

This area lies between Cimmaron, Almarrón, Saragón, and Guadalante. Though the title refers primarily to the cactus scrub in the region, common usage of the name includes badlands, hills, desert, and more—all the land outside the borders of the baronies, east of the Sierra Desperada hills, and north of the New Hope River. Home to gnolls and humanoid bandits, El Grande Carrascal is a dangerous place.

Several camps of gnolls inhabit this region; the major tribes are Long Legs, Chiriquis, and Dead Yuccas. While the Long Legs are a savage tribe, the others trade with humans of the region and are willing to negotiate.

The Long Legs were able to unite all the El Grande Carrascal gnoll tribes, major and minor, about three years ago, leading a violent attack against many of the baronies. These gnolls destroyed two castles, one in Almarrón and one in Gargoña, before they were defeated by Saragóner forces (aided by Cimmaron cavalry) at the Battle of Morrión. In late 1008, their alliance fell apart after they were defeated by Cimmaron troops under Sir John, at the Red Creek Battle. Having lost too many of their people, the gnoll tribes went back to a reasonably peaceful existence—except for the few remaining Long Legs, who still raid now and again.

An interesting site in El Grande Carrascal is Buenos Viente—an ancient, ruined town, possibly Traladaran in origin—and named by later Ispans who found it. Buenos Viente stands in the middle of the cactus scrub, a well-preserved set of buildings that appears to have once held more than 3,000

inhabitants. Most of the buildings are made of fired clay, and so have stood up to the ravages of time. Those who have explored the town report eerie voices, like echoes of half-heard conversations. The place seems to be haunted, a true "ghost town."

Bushwhack Prairie and the Badlands

Bushwhack Prairie, named for the bandit ambushes so common there, encompasses the grasslands just west of Cimmaron. Buffalo and wild horses roam the southern portions of the prairie; camps of Gauchos and Bandit encampments are found throughout the region. Fort Whitestone sits at the western edge of Bushwhack Prairie, and sends out regular patrols to watch for goblin raiders and human Bandits. Though the fort has reduced the number of Bandits in the region, more than enough of the lawless men and women still roam the area to make people think twice before traveling through Bushwhack Prairie, even along Bugle Trail (although, at least on the trail, travelers have a much better chance of being rescued by cavalry charging over the hill).

Bushwhack Prairie includes two notable battle sites, the Battle of Hondo where General Cimmaron won independence from Almarrón, and Longhorn's Last Stand where the general met his end 28 years later. Both battle sites are littered with the bones of those who died there, except for the few, like General Cimmaron, whose bones were brought back to Cimmaron for burial.

The goblins who killed General Cimmaron came from the Badlands, a rocky area west of Bushwhack Prairie. Goblins rule the Badlands; their two major tribes are Black Bellies and Flat Noses. Though some Yazi gnolls actually engage in commerce, Yazi goblins of the Badlands are savage destroyers who live by preying on others.

Robrenn and Eusdria

West of the baronies are a small range of mountains and fertile lands which support large stretches of forest and grasslands. Around these elements rest the nations of Robrenn and Eusdria. Like the baronies, both are dominated by humans, descended from barbarians who migrated into the area from the north. Dwarves also reside in Eusdria in great numbers, and elves live in both states. Because these nations have been hurt by the Red Curse, they remain suspicious of Inheritors. Though they would certainly welcome the eradication of the curse, it might prove difficult to motivate them to follow any leadership that includes Inheritors.

—*The Chronicle of the Curse*
by Don Luis de Manzanas

The people of Robrenn and Eusdria are descended from the ancient barbarian tribes that fled the marching armies of Hule, far to the north. The barbarians hoped to one day reconquer their homeland, but that day never came. Instead, they came to love their new lands and eventually established medieval societies.

The humans of these nations are taller than average; add four inches to heights rolled according to the method in the *PHB* (adjust weight upward by about 10 pounds as well). Both nations also have large populations of elves and half-elves. Humans, elves, and half-elves here tend to have blond hair, though some have white or red. Most have sky-blue eyes, though darker blue and shades of green are found as well. Very few people of these nations have brown or hazel eyes, and people with these eye shades are considered exotic.

The Confederated Kingdom of Robrenn

Robrenn contains vast tracts of forest and is dominated by druids. Harming the forests, or any of the creatures who dwell in them, is usually considered a crime.

Robrenn's people tend to have wavy hair, commonly worn shoulder length (for both sexes). Most wear their hair loose, though warriors typically wear a braid on one side of the head in front of the ear. Clothing worn by people of Robrenn is usually made of cotton, leather, or buckskin in forest colors (predominantly green and brown, with occasional splashes of yellow, red, or orange). Often, at least one item worn has sharp, geometric patterns.

The most common character classes in Robrenn are druid, ranger, fighter, and bard. Popular kits include Local Hero, Noble, Defender, Wokan, War Priest, Bandit, and Scout. Noble druids and bards originate only in Robrenn.

Robrenn is a confederation of sovereign dominions. The fair climate and generous forests were an early boon to this druidic society. Its braided warriors thrived, though over the centuries their barbaric culture mellowed. The tribal chiefs instituted a nobility that slowly allowed a semi-feudal system to replace the tribal structure. The nobles then initiated a confederacy under the rulership of a new king, Robrenn I, chosen by the druids.

Since then, the king's descendants have inherited his title. Should his lineage become extinct, the druids would choose one of the current nobles as the new ruler. In other respects,the nation has a conventional feudal society, with druids replacing the more traditional clerics. However, no real peasant class exists in Robrenn. Non-nobles are known simply as the Folk; they are free and approximately middle class rather than land-bound and poor like peasants. Nobility and warriors must swear allegiance to the ruler and follow the ways of the druids.

Men and women are of equal status in this society. It is the belief of the Robrenn that their chief patron Immortal, Breig, is the mother of nature. As a result, the highest functions among the druids are often limited to women. However, in order to maintain universal balance, right of birth usually (but not exclusively) favors males. For example, the first-born male has priority over a female in the succession for a nobility title or the ownership of a family heirloom. In general, all that is mystical or linked to nature and creation is considered to be the realm of women; all that is material or linked to warfare and destruction is held to be the realm of men. Note that this does not restrict women from becoming warriors, or men from becoming druids, but such instances are uncommon.

To enforce laws and protect borders, the Confederacy maintains a small standing army, the Guard. A vast reserve of trained and armed citizens also exists. The druids provide a set of weapons and armor to each family's first child upon reaching puberty. (A female child has the right to refuse the weapons if a younger male exists in the family.) The "chosen one" must leave the family and remain with the Confederacy's Guard to learn the art of war. Three years later, the young adult earns the title

of "Armed Citizen" and can return home.

Because of this policy, many warriors live in Robrenn, as well as a high ratio of dual-class and multi-class warriors. Each Armed Citizen must provide a month of military service to the Confederacy once a year to support its defense and to stay in shape and ready for battle. In times of war, all Armed Citizens must temporarily return to the Guard.

The druids systematically enforce this system, sometimes quite ruthlessly. Any perceived lack of enthusiasm or poor physical fitness can lead to penances or even banishment. Robrenn's citizens are a fierce and brave people. It was their personality more than any need for warriors that led to the creation of these laws; thus, few actually resent them. Becoming an Armed Citizen is a sign of honor. In this society, Defenders (people with the Defender kit) can rise only among the ranks of Armed Citizens.

Druids are eminently powerful among nobility; they make laws and decide on penalties. The druids may also permit, forbid, or even decree armed conflicts involving the nation. Druids affect the confederacy's ability to attack another realm, or the ability of two dominions to fight each other. The latter is permissible only if druids cannot solve a dispute between two nobles. Considering the deeply rooted respect this society has for druids, disobeying them is almost unheard of and could lead to a civil war.

The druids' Hallowed Forest of Carnuilh covers a vast area of the confederacy. It is a sanctified area that no one but druids and druidic Defenders can enter. At its center is a holy grove where the druids meet once a year, on midsummer's eve. There, they discuss topics of mysticism, consult auguries, and resolve problems.

After each 12 years of continuous rulership, the king of Robrenn must go on a quest. If he succeeds, he remains king for another 12 years. If he fails, he must seek the Great Druid's grove in the Hallowed Forest of Carnuilh. Legends say he returns to the earth that he embodies, thereby allowing the land to flourish again. He is magically "absorbed" by the forest, thus ending his life in this world. No succession can take place until the king dies or joins with the forest. If he flees in shame and dies elsewhere without fulfilling his duty at the grove, years of woe and hardship may strike the kingdom.

The Robrenn honor a wide variety of Immortals. Their belief is that all life came from Breig, also known as the Mother of Nature, the Great Oak, and the Spirit of Eyf. She heads the Robrenn pantheon. Although a druid can choose one Immortal over another as his primary patron, all meet at Carnuilh. Regardless of their individual philosophies, all druids follow the same basic principles. They all revere the Great Druid Maud, daughter of Trestana. Maud is a female, half-elven follower of Breig. (Great Druids in Robrenn are typically female.) Though other Great Druids may exist elsewhere in the world, as far as the Robrenn are concerned, there is only Maud. This Great Druid supervises the entire Savage Coast region, including all the territory from the Gulf of Hule to the western coast of the Orc's Head Peninsula.

The druids also supervise the druidic Defenders, which some think of as "druidic paladins." Defenders are the elite warriors of the nation, often traveling on quests for druids or simply to explore and spread druidic beliefs. Note that druidic Defenders sometimes wear magically crafted wooden armor which has the same game mechanics as metal armor.

Most of Robrenn's lore is oral, handed down by bards and druids. Little has been written (though the people are literate) because the druids believe that memorizing legends and prayers sharpens the mind and prevents their holy knowledge from being vulgarized by ink and vellum. This tradition establishes the bard as a key element of Robrenn culture.

Much of this culture is affected by the druids' dislike of all that "never lived," including man-made objects of metal or stone. Robrenn's druids prefer wood, leather, cloth, and so forth. This attitude prevents the Robrenn from building much with stone. Their forts and towns are usually made of wood, with stone used only for fireplaces or roads. Unfortunately, the policy has been the source of many disasters, especially in times of war.

The plateaus to the north of the Robrenn teem with orcs, ogres, and goblins. Armed riders constantly patrol the northern edge of the confederacy, watching for invasions in the making. A number of murderous wars with the goblinoids have nearly ruined the nation. The most recent of which weakened the state considerably.

Over the course of centuries, the Robrenn developed trade with other nations, especially with Texeiran and Vilaverdan merchants. Robrenn exports wine, mead, sausage, maize, wheat, medicinal herbs and potions, spices, and amber. *Cinnabryl* and *red steel* are of little interest to the nation, though raw silver is acceptable in trade, for coinage. Usually, the Robrenn would rather obtain payment in labor. Many people from the nation Savage Baronies make annual circuits through Robrenn as itinerant farm-workers, trading labor for goods. Some Guardiano tradesmen also trade criminals for goods, the convicts being kept as indentured servants. If they serve well, they are released when their allotted period is over and can either return home or accept druidic ways and become one of the Folk.

Capital and Ruler

Capital: Eyf (population 25,200—humans, demihumans, some woodland beings). Ruler: King Edwix II, son of "The Night Harrow" (human druidic Defender). The royal lands include all of the Hallowed Carnuilh Forest. Typical NPC: common farmer or crafter, follower of the druidic way.

The Confederated Dominions

Each of Robrenn's dominions governs its own internal affairs, though the druids can interfere at will. The druids also advise the king and his council on international policy.

Barony of Avarica. Symbol: Raven. Capital: Dubrax (population 5,900—mostly humans). Ruler: Baron Eusgetorix the Stormy, son of Aduatucas (human Noble bard). Typical NPC: adventurous bard. Patrons: Cernuínn, Leug.

Duchy of Avernos. Symbol: Boar. Capital: Arax (population 5,900—humans and dwarves). Ruler: Duke Blergix the Tall, son of Medonix (dwarven Noble fighter). Typical NPC: blacksmith. Patrons: Belsamas, Tuatis.

County of Morguen. Symbol: Deer. Capital: Cernumna (population 10,900—humans, halflings, and elves). Ruler: Countess Onnena the Sylvan, daughter of Subellos (half-elf Noble druid). Typical NPC: druid sage. Patrons: Breig, Cernuínn.

Barony of Nemausa. Symbol: Auroch. Capital: Morrigamna (population 10,100—mostly humans). Ruler: Baron Calturix the Bloodthirsty, son of Demiatix (human Noble ranger). Typical NPC: fearless rider. Patrons: Breig, Tuatis.

Barony of Sedhuen. Symbol: Ram. Capital: Venatis (population 11,900—mostly humans). Ruler: Baron Teuthoel the Merciful, son of Trestana (human noble). Typical NPC: peaceful farmer. Patrons: Breig, Belnos.

County of Suerba. Symbol: Rooster. Capital: Ogmna (population 3,800—humans and elves). Ruler: Count Brevoel the Swift, son of Maloel (elven Noble fighter). Typical NPC: champion archer. Patrons: Arduínna, Leug.

Barony of Uthuínn. Symbol: Ship. Capital: Senerobriva (population 2,600—humans and halflings). Ruler: Baroness Brivaela the Sagacious, daughter of Clothual (human Noble fighter). Typical NPC: quiet fisherman. Patrons: Belnos, Taranos.

The Robrenn Pantheon

In Robrenn each of the following Immortals, with the exception of Belsamas and Nyt, has a druidic following. Refer to "The Campaign" chapter for further information on Immortals.

Arduínna (Diulanna): Patron of willpower, archery, and hunting. She approves only of female druids.

Belnos (Asterius): Patron of healers, traders, and travelers.

Belsamas (Kagyar): Patron of forging, metalworking, construction, and dwarves. Clerics of Belsamas are always true neutral in Robrenn.

Breig (Ordana): Patron of Robrenn, head of the pantheon. She approves only of female druids.

Cernuínn (Faunus): Patron of forests, songs, poetry, bards, and woodland beings.

Leug (Zirchev): Patron of demihumans, wisdom, and the arts. Leug is a recent addition to the Robrenn pantheon.

Nyt (Hel): Patron of death and reincarnation. She is acknowledged, but not worshiped.

Taranos (Odin): Patron of skies, storms, and mighty lightnings. This Immortal is not as influential here as in Eusdria.

Tuatis (Thor): Favorite patron of warriors.

The Kingdom of Eusdria

Most Eusdrians have straight hair, and the majority grow it long and form it into one long braid—usually worn down the middle of the back but sometimes thrown over the left shoulder. Eusdrians tend toward clothing of cotton and buckskin, though wool and fur are used in the colder, mountainous areas. The clothing is usually made in blues, purples, and whites—though grays, greens, and browns are used as well.

Eusdrian society consists of a nobility, which provides the nation's leaders, and a "freeheart" class, which is the normal citizenry. Like Robrenn, Eusdria has no real peasant class. Most freehearts are warriors, but clerics come from this class as well. Though Eusdria does have some thieves and bards, wizards are rare. Popular kits include Local Hero, Noble, Honorbound, Myrmidon, Militant, War Priest, Bandit, Scout, and Skald.

In its past, Eusdria has had a number of clashes with Robrenn. The druids and clerics on either side always spoke against all-out war since both nations largely honor the same Immortals, though by different names. Eusdrian clerics are uncomfortable with the mysterious and "barbaric" ways of Robrenn druids, just as the druids distrust the Eusdrian clerics' "unnatural" and "self-serving" ways.

The two kingdoms have maintained a precarious status quo, poised somewhere between cordiality and rampant accusations of heresy.

The biggest difference between Robrenn and Eusdria lies in the greater presence and influence of elves in Eusdria, particularly in the Duchy of Frisonnia and the Barony of Savaria. A great deal of the finer Eusdrian culture has come from the elves, including literature, architecture, and fine arts.

Eusdrians are fond of battle. They believe that death on the battlefield is by far the best way to die, for it opens the path to the land of the Immortals. This ancient belief dates back to their barbarian roots in the north. Before a battle, warriors often celebrate and drink beer mixed with honey, a combination thought to impart strength and courage. Fortunately, the elven love for peace and tranquility has somewhat toned down this predisposition to aggressiveness. At the very least, it has brought order and law to the impetuous Eusdrians.

Elven influence has led the Eusdrians to create several orders of knights, including paladins and Defenders (Order of the Immortals), Honorbound (Knights of Eusdria), rangers (Company of the Wolf), Myrmidons, and others (Order of the Unicorn, Company of the Bear, Warriors of the Sea, and Knights of Niedegard). Instead of fighting for the sake of battle and destruction, the Eusdrians learned to channel their battle fervor through military organizations with a direction. The easiest orders to make popular among early Eusdrians were those dedicated to serving a ruler (particularly the king of Eusdria), and later, orders that served the Immortals. This has given rise to a caste of knights and paladins capable of defending the nation against any foe.

While Myrmidons are common in Eusdria, most warriors use the Honorbound kit. All the nation's Honorbound form a single Company, the Knights of Eusdria, all of whom wear the same emblem (a black raven on a silver field) and specialize in the use of the battle axe. The Honorbound are sworn to first defend the nation in times of trouble, and second obey edicts of their leader.

Many inhabitants of Eusdria are beginning to adopt the firearms and lighter armor of the Savage Baronies. The more traditionalist warriors of the region find this dishonorable.

The present king, Sigismund III, is a half-elf Defender and highly charismatic follower of Tiuz. Sigismund is well known for his even-handedness with his dominions, both elven (Frisonnia and Savaria) and human (Harstal and Mohesia). He dreams of ridding the Yazak Steppes of goblinoids and other monsters and of expanding his kingdom into a holy empire in the name of Tiuz. For the past 20 years of his reign, he has promoted the Warrior's Honor (as described in the Honorbound kit in the "Character Kits" chapter) among his people, aspiring for a smaller force of highly competent warriors, in contrast to the massive barbaric hordes of the past. In knighthood, he also sees the possible establishment of a highly mobile, elite, heavy cavalry whose loyalty and prowess would bring the end of the marauding tribes of the steppes. Dwarven crossbowmen from the County of Harstal also go to battle in trains of heavy war wagons that make them something like cavalry in mobile forts. All this allows the king to wage long-lasting wars without pulling normal freehearts away from their lands to be slaughtered in massive battles. Such a loss would weaken the kingdom, as it has many times in the past, and bring hardships to everyone.

Only recently, Eusdria joined Robrenn in a war against the Yazi goblinoids. This was favored by many of the freehearts, and when King Sigismund tried to pull out of the war, many revolted, starting a civil war. As a result, the capital was all but destroyed, but the Honorbound Knights of Eusdria kept the king from death. Consequently, the Honorbound are highly regarded by the king.

King Sigismund has not unleashed his warriors upon the Yazak goblinoids because of a curious phenomenon affecting the Plain of Dreams at the northern limit of the kingdom. Tradition says that the Immortal Lokar lost a bet with Donar and was forced to plant flowers throughout the entire plain. But Lokar cursed the flowers, giving them the power to put people and animals to sleep. These large beds of amber lotuses release clouds of sleeping pollen. The goblinoids apparently have found a way to protect themselves and their mounts from the pollen, allowing them an easy escape after their raids into Mohesia and Frisonnia. As a result of these onslaughts, villages and towns in these two dominions are heavily fortified. Eusdria's king is still hoping to find a reliable defense against the pollen for his own people.

King Sigismund is famous for developing an educational system for the young, supported by royal taxes. With this, he hopes to lead Eusdria to a golden age, amassing enough power to dominate the Savage Coast and eventually destroy Hule. The schools are largely unpopular among the freehearts, however, since they keep children from working in the fields or apprenticing in a craft. The nobles also dislike them because educated subjects are more difficult to rule, and higher taxes are required for construction of school buildings, purchase of books, and payment of preceptors (usually clergymen). The clergy, however, strongly supports the plan as it lends them power over commoners and nobles.

About a decade ago, Eusdria was visited by the Heldannic Knights, from the faraway Heldann freeholds. (There are similarities and thus sympathy between Eusdria and Heldann, but King Sigismund has always suspected the Heldannic Knights' dark and treacherous ways.) When they arrived, the Heldannic Knights arranged for Eusdria to acquire *red steel*, through the Texeiran Protectorate. In doing so, the Heldannic Knights gained the gratitude of the various orders of

Eusdrian knights. This worried King Sigismund greatly. Contact with the Heldannic Knights ceased about five years ago; the rare messages since then have been largely ignored by Sigismund.

Eusdria now imports *red steel* and a little *cinnabryl* directly from the Savage Baronies via the Orders of Inheritors. The precious red metal is used to forge excellent battle axes, plate armor, and bastard swords for Eusdrian knights.

Most Eusdrian trade is with the Kingdom of Robrenn and the Texeiran merchant fleet. Eusdria has a small fleet in Reslar and Withimer, but it is no match for experienced Texeiran sea wolves. From the Niedegard Mountains, dwarven miners extract iron and copper, which are largely exported along with beer, honey, furs, timber, and herring.

Capital and Ruler

Capital: Othmar (population 7,500—primarily humans, elves, and dwarves). Ruler: King Sigismund III the Great, son of Godegesil (half-elf Defender of Tiuz). The Royal Domain includes the capital, Ingelhad, Withimer, and the ruins of the former capital, Gundegard (once a city of more than 20,000 people, now home to perhaps 2,000 people and many monsters). Typical NPC: Honorbound or Myrmidon warrior. Patrons: Viuden and Tiuz.

Eusdrian Royal Dominions

Each of the dominions governs most of its own internal affairs, but the crown can revoke internal policies. The king, advised by a council of clergy and various knights and nobles, decides international policy. After the recent wars, a freeheart council was established to help advise the king.

Duchy of Frisonnia. Symbol: Tower. Capital: Breimald (population 12,300—mostly elves, some humans). Ruler: Duchess Beovilda the Blunt, daughter of Onulf (elven Noble fighter). Typical NPC: elven urban warrior. Patrons: Donar, Tiuz.

County of Harstal. Symbol: Bear. Capital: Harstal (population 10,400—humans and dwarves, some halflings). Ruler: Count Theodamir the Stutterer, son of Althuin (human noble). Typical NPC: boisterous beer drinker. Patrons: Viuden, Kagyar, Fredar, Fredara.

Barony of Mohesia. Symbol: Horse. Capital: Verdegild (population 6,600—mostly humans, some elves). Ruler: Baron Arthaulf the Forthright, son of Euric (human Honorbound paladin). Typical NPC: righteous warrior. Patrons: Donar, Tiuz, Fredar, Fredara.

Barony of Savaria. Symbol: Fish. Capital: Reslar (population 8,500—mostly elves, some humans and halflings). Ruler: Baroness Utha the Fair, daughter of Aldaric (elven Noble ranger). Typical NPC: elven warrior (hunter or fisher). Patrons: Eirys, Tiuz.

The Eusdrian Pantheon

For further information on Immortals, refer to "The Campaign" chapter.

Donar (Thor): Popular patron of warfare.

Eirys (Eiryndul): Patron of woodland beings and elves, but especially of elf wizards.

Fredar (Frey): Patron of freeheart warriors.

Fredara (Freya): Patron of female warriors.

Kagyar: Patron of dwarves and metalwork.

Lokar (Loki): Patron of flames, mischief, and lies, Lokar is not honored except by evil beings.

Nyt (Hel): Patron of death and reincarnation. She is acknowledged but not worshiped.

Tiuz (Ilsundal): Patron of elves, wisdom, law, and trust, Tiuz is often represented as a warrior missing his right hand.

Viuden (Odin): Chief Immortal of the Eusdrians. Patron of the sky, storms, and authority.

Renardy and Bellayne

Located in the center of the Savage Coast, the kingdoms of Renardy and Bellayne are dominated by the furred peoples of the Savage Coast, the doglike lupins and the feline rakastas. The spirit of adventure is present in both races, as are such qualities as nobility and honor. I believe their help would be important in the removal of the Red Curse.

—*The Chronicle of the Curse*
by Don Luis de Manzanas

The kingdoms of Renardy and Bellayne are the domains of nonhumans: lupins and rakastas, respectively. Both races are native to the region, and on the Savage Coast, they are nearly as common as humans.

The Kingdom of Renardy

Known to its inhabitants as the "Royaume de Renardie," Renardy is the kingdom of the canine lupins. The kingdom's coat of arms shows a golden fox rampant in the 1st and 4th quarters, and fleurs-de-lis in an azure field in the 2nd and 3rd quarters, with royal crown and golden crest overhead.

Early lupins were nomads, tribes of hunters who roamed the Yazak Steppes and the southern central plains. Then, the goblinoids of the Yazak Steppes captured much of the lupins' hunting grounds, scattering many tribes. About 1,000 years ago, five tribes regrouped to the south and formed an alliance to defend their lands against the goblinoids; they are hailed as the founders of Renardy. Over the next 10 centuries, the tribes developed into typical medieval dominions under the authority of a king, who built his capital on the site of an old lupin camp. This site became the city of Louvines, on the Dream River. Most recently, the inhabitants of Renardy have begun imitating the clothing and fighting styles of the Savage Baronies.

The Dream River (or River of Dreams) flows into Renardy from the Plain of Dreams, a vast field of amber lotuses whose pollen induces sleep. To prevent the lotuses from plaguing their lands, lupins installed a water lock whose sole function was to strip out all debris floating on the river (particularly plants) before the water flowed further south. Construction was possible due to the help of lupin clerics, who protected workers against the effects of the plants. Eventually, the water lock grew into the mighty fortress, Château-Roan.

Sleep-producing plants also infested lands nearby, so clerics directed a purge about five centuries ago. They systematically destroyed the plants and scorched the earth, slowly gaining territory to the east and north. This infuriated the goblinoids, who thought their conquered territories were being threatened, so they launched a brutal campaign to slay all lupins. Fortunately, the valiant dog-people held their ground. The war led the lupins to build border fortresses, and most towns and villages erected walls. The late King Gaston de Clairvault ordered the construction of le Grand Mur (the Great Wall) to protect his subjects from the goblinoid hordes and halt the spread of the cursed plants. Today the wall is complete, and the Plain of Louvines is a lush, fertile valley dotted with hamlets and farms.

Within the last hundred years, the lupins have been strongly influenced by the humans of the Savage Coast, especially the people of the Savage Baronies. Renardy has close ties with Torreón and gets along well with Almarrón, Saragón, and Gargoña. The Renardois have even adopted the swashbuckling style of people of the Savage Baronies, and duels are quite popular in Renardy.

The Renardois are at peace with most of their neighbors and have a nonaggression pact with Eusdria. King Louis IV ("the Theatrical") of Renardy has held formal talks with King Sigismund of Eusdria, occasionally discussing an alliance against the goblinoids. King Sigismund is also willing to trade an undisclosed amount of *red steel* for the lupins' ancient, secret protection against the cursed plants in the Plain of Dreams. Both kings dream of conquering wide swaths of the northern plains—Sigismund to gain imperial power, Louis to recover ancestral lupin hunting grounds.

The wine trade is of particular importance to Renardy, affecting many things in the Renardois' daily life, from business to political power. The existence of the small châteaux (country houses and estates) and vineyards have a greater significance than most outsiders might think. Nobles and bourgeois (members of the self-employed middle class) commonly own such châteaux and seek prestige for the quality of their wines. Châteaux range from small fortified manors to well-defended towers. Most have armed guards.

Bourgeois commonly settle north or west, outside the limits of the kingdom on lands that are not part of the established nobility's domains. For a fee, a bourgeois' claim on the land is registered at the Palace of Louvines by the royal bailiff (Bailli du Roi). This practice angers the goblinoids, who see the fringes of their immense tribal land being nibbled away. Renardois nobility defends the bourgeoisie, who are slowly regaining the race's ancestral lands.

Each winter a jury of wine-tasters, the Brotherhood of Vintages, judges which wine in Renardy is the best. The king, bourgeois, and nobles are allowed to present samples, which are numbered but otherwise unmarked to preclude cheating. The winner receives a golden vine leaf from the Brotherhood. A bourgeois who, over time, receives seven leaves is elevated to nobility. The king recognizes the bourgeois as a baron. In exchange for the title, the new baron swears fealty to the king, and the estate becomes a dominion of the kingdom.

Likewise, seven leaves allow a noble to ascend a rank, such as from baron to count, with "Grand Duke" being the highest attainable title. A rank cannot be lost except by royal decree (a punishment for treachery). If a noble's family is dispossessed or becomes extinct, the king divides the land into châteaux. The lords of the manors who administered vineyards for their noble master can purchase the land if they meet a price set by the king,
thus becoming bourgeois. Otherwise, the land is auctioned. Until nobility rises from the nouvelle bourgeoisie (new bourgeoisie), the land remains with the king.

Monasteries often own vineyards. Should they win seven leaves, their territory would become a royal dominion under the authority of the Renardois clergy. Depending on the number of awards, the landlord could become an abbot, a bishop, or an archbishop. Although not shown on the map, many such monasteries within larger dominions eventually escape a noble's authority, including taxation and other regulations. Clergymen cannot attain royalty.

The first king of Renardy was put on the throne by allied tribal chiefs. Since then, the crown has been a hereditary title. Should the royal family become extinct, the noble of the highest rank and with the highest number of leaves would become the new king.

Besides prestige, the wine trade encourages territorial and economic growth for the kingdom. The more "leaves" a wine is awarded, the more popular it is among the connoisseurs, and the more expensive it becomes. Legends state that some of the best vintages (seven gold leaves or more) have mystical powers, such as the abilities to heal, instill joy or sadness, enhance strength or bravery, or even compel truth (thus the saying "In Vino Veritas," although simple inebriety often achieves the same results). Of course, wine-growing and fermentation techniques are utterly secret, invaluable family heirlooms never discussed with outsiders.

Competition among vineyards is fierce, if not outright sordid. Almost no guile or villainy is too low. Although lupins tend toward law and good, nearly anything goes when it comes to wine. Local bourgeoisie usually rush to bid for a fallen competitor's land (they may even coerce the latter to sell out) or establish a new claim at the Bailli du Roi should all legal owners of the land be gone or deceased. This is often how nobles and bourgeois increase their domains.

Capital and Ruler

Capital: Louvines (population 31,700—mostly lupins, some humans, demihumans, and tortles). Ruler: King Louis IV "Le Cabotin," son of Gaston de Clairvault (an aged Beast Rider). The royal domain includes the communities of Daens and Saimpt Vézy. Patron: Saimpt Renard. Typical NPC: bourgeois or peasant.

Dominions of "Sa Majesté le Roi"

Each domain owes fealty to the king, whose word is supreme. However, daily operations are left to local rulers.

Baronie de Brégoigne. Capital: Rochefort (population 3,100). Ruler: Baron Philippe "Le Chevalier Sans Puce et Sans Reproche," son of Grégoire de Rochefort (Noble fighter). Typical NPC: cleric. Patrons: Saimpts Mâtin and Malinois.

Comté de Marmandie. Capital: Mons-en-Plécy (population 7,300). Ruler: Comtesse Marguerite "La Soyeuse," daughter of Gilles de Saimpt Gens-de-Bout (Local Hero ranger). Typical NPC: swashbuckler, adventurer, or explorer. Patron: Saimpt Clébard.

Marquisat de Noijou. Capital: Pertignac (population 6,300). Ruler: Marquis François "Le Hautain," son of Fouques de Valefroi (Noble wizard). Typical NPC: wizard, sage, palace or cathedral architect, or wine merchant. Patron: Saimpt Ralon.

Duché d'Ysembragne. Capital: Deauvais (population 8,300). Ruler: Duc Henri "Le Grognard," son of Thibaud de Châtelguyon (Beast Rider). Typical NPC: Beast Rider. Patron: Saimpt Loup.

The Lupin Pantheon

Lupins refer to Immortals as saimpts, holy lupins who achieved ultimate greatness in this world. Over the centuries, many saimpts were authenticated, either genuine Immortals or heroes of the lupins' history now long gone. Following are descriptions of some of the more popular saimpts.

Saimpt Clébard: Patron of loyalty, fidelity, and family.

Saimpt Loup: Patron of mercy, hunger, destruction, night, and winter. Saimpt Loup portrays both good and evil among lupins.

Saimpt Malinois, the Were-Slayer: Patron of hunters, revenge, courage, warriors, blacksmiths, and those who go to war.

Saimpt Mâtin: Patron of fortresses, guards, and those who died on the battlefield defending their kin. He is the master of safety and happiness at home.

Saimpt Ralon: Patron of life, good food, fun, health, wealth, farmers, merchants, and those who produce goods.

Saimpt Renard (Korotiku): Patron of wit, freedom of thought, wisdom, sense of smell, cunning, and trickery. The chief Immortal of the pantheon, Renard has so far guided the royal dynasty of the Clairvaults well. He is the only Immortal of this group who was not a lupin (although everyone in Renardy would object to this statement).

The Kingdom of Bellayne

The people of Bellayne are rakastas. Like the lupins, they were pushed toward the coast by goblinoids of the steppes. About 500 years ago, they discovered Bellayne, a nation of mostly humans and some dwarves and elves. The humans had a feudal society, just beginning to develop a system of national laws and justice. Some rakastas settled permanently on the edges of Bellayne, while most remained wanderers. Not long afterward, the humans and many of the demihumans were slain by a mysterious plague. Those remaining citizens invited the rakastas into Bellayne.

A great tribe of savage rakastas eventually settled, most adopting the humans' feudal system and taking over the ruins to establish a society that is an odd mix of human culture and rakastan mystical tradition. Present-day Bellayne has a feudal system of government and a fine system of justice and law. Additionally, many rakastas have begun to shed their traditional ways; the firearms and fighting styles of the Savage Baronies have even managed to take hold in this society. However, this is somewhat misleading, for most rakastas are still warriors at heart. Those settled in Bellayne have simply managed to gain control over their emotions.

In addition, nomadic rakastas still wander the lands of Bellayne and the Yazak Steppes. When within the borders of Bellayne (which they largely ignore), these nomads wander from town to town, trading for (and sometimes stealing) the goods they need to live. The nomads regard the town dwellers with some disdain, not understanding why they would give up the freedom and independence of the nomadic life. The town dwellers, in turn, do not understand why the nomads scorn the comfort and stability of settled life. Many of the nomads are Beast Riders who have feliquine companions (see the "Character Kits" chapter for details). Thetown dwellers view these warriors as brave and skillful, but nevertheless savage. When a nomadic tribe faces great hardship, the towns offer solace; in return, the nomads help protect the towns. Note that while town dwellers readily accept humans and demihumans, only a few exceptional elves have found places with the nomads.

Warriors are quite common in Bellayne, with the Noble, Beast Rider, and Honorbound kits the most popular. Defenders, Myrmidons, and Local Heroes are not uncommon though. Wizards of Bellayne include the rare Militants who ride with the nomads and the hermitlike Wokani, who carry on traditions hundreds of years old and are regarded as bizarre eccentrics by most rakastas. Fighting Monks are very popular in Bellayne, blending ancient warrior traditions with scholarly pursuits, and some War Priests are found in Bellayne. Oddly, many thieves live in Bellayne, mostly Scouts and Local Heroes. Bards are also popular. (For information on these kits, see the "Character Kits" chapter.)

Perhaps the greatest innovation in Bellayne is the traditional entertainment. Bellayne harbors a number of illustrious companies of bards, the Heralds of Bellayne. These bards gather information and relate it to the common people, often using illusions and other magic. Their guilds are so eager to find news they will often organize spectacular events or send some of their best members on amazing adventures across the world. Another activity of the guilds is to write colorful manuscripts and sell them to nobility. Each guild has a headquarters in Leminster, where new members are registered, stories are learned, and manuscripts are filed.

Bellayne is also home to several Companies of Honorbound. Each dominion has at least one Company, and each Company usually maintains a hostel in every town of Bellayne. Honorbound are also given quarter in the various castles and towers of Bellayne. The code followed by the Honorbound is a mix of ancient rakastan Beast Rider creeds and elven tradition, even adopting a few human notions of chivalry. The code is followed by all Honorbound, as well as most Beast Riders; most other warriors of Bellayne follow at least the Protocols of the code. The code is described in detail in the Honorbound kit in the "Character Kits" chapter.

Two Companies of Honorbound are devoted to the queen: the Royal Honorguard, which guards the queen and her household; and the Defenders of Bellayne, who patrol the nation and serve as military leaders in times of war. Each Company allows members of any race, though rakastas are by far the most common. There are many other Companies as well, including single race groups, such as the Company of the Shell, which allows only tortles; the Red Company, which allows only rakastas; and the Friends of the Forests, which allows only elves. Each Company is registered in Leminster and must receive a royal charter to operate legally in Bellayne.

With their strong warrior traditions, the Bellaynish have succeeded in keeping the goblinoids at bay. An organized defense of its land and a disciplined, loyal citizenry have allowed Bellayne to prosper.

Lupins and rakastas competed in the past for territorial control of the Yazak steppes, their common ancestral lands. Although presently at peace, the two races have remained somewhat suspicious of each other for this reason, but the goblinoid threat in the north keeps the two nations friendly. Also, over the years the Bellaynish have developed a taste for Renardois wines, which the latter trade for Bellayne's excellent wools, tea, liquors, and coal.

Bellayne developed land trade with Renardy and other kingdoms with the "help" of Vilaverdan sea traders. Vilaverde established a colony south of Bellayne, its primary goal to control naval access to Theeds. Queen Catherine views Vilaverde's colony of Terra Leãoça (pronounced *leh-ah-OH-sa*) as a mixed blessing. The Vilaverdan quasi monopoly of sea trade in the region is costly, at best, for Bellayne.

Vilaverde maintains a strong military presence at Rocha dos Gatos (the "Rock of the Cats"), a very large fortress and port of Leãoça that includes Torreón swordsmen and rakasta outcasts. Bellaynish rakastas show outstanding seamanship, but Vilaverdans contend that this is due entirely to the rakastas' amazing ingenuity at avoiding the water altogether. Indeed, very few rakastas master swimming skills, but they still remain without peer when it comes to fishing.

Recently, a community of dwarves established itself in Bellayne after an explorer discovered "black rock" deposits in Penwick. The coal became particularly useful in metal working.

Capital and Ruler

Capital: Leminster (population 30,300—mostly rakastas, many elves, some humans, demihumans, and tortles). Ruler: Queen Catherine I "The Lioness," daughter of the late King Lionel I of Dorsythe (noble). The queen's domain includes the communities of Chansea and Bromstow, and the ruins of the town of Chatsworth. Typical NPC: urban peasant, crafter, or warrior. Patron: Pax Bellanica.

Dominions of Her Majesty

The queen works with a council of nobles from the various dominions. While her word is considered law, she tends to listen to the council. Bellayne has a set of national laws that affects everyone, even on a local level. The various dominions are in charge of enforcing the laws.

Bishopric of Kitting. Capital: Glenswych (population 4,500—mostly rakastas). Ruler: Sir Humphrey "The Exalted," son of Sir Jasper Cockerfield (Noble cleric). Typical NPC: rakasta War Priest. Patron: Belbion.

Duchy of Pachester. Capital: Wallingford (population 6,700—rakastas, humans, and elves). Ruler: Lord Perceval "The Iron Clawed," son of Sir Hume (Noble fighter). Typical NPC: rakasta Honorbound warrior. Patron: Belbion.

Earldom of Penwick. Capital: Norchester (population 7,800—rakastas, dwarves, halflings). Ruler: Lord Mortimer "The Defiant," son of Sir Edward Hillsborough (Noble). Typical NPC: rakasta or dwarf coal miner. Patron: Kagyar.

Earldom of Theeds. Capital: Theeds (population 22,400—rakastas, elves, some humans, halflings). Ruler: Lord Rodney "The Intrepid," son of Sir Winston Gladsworthy (Honorbound fighter). Typical NPC: rakasta merchant or fisherman. Patron: Felidae.

Forest Marches of Wyndham. Capital: none (population is mostly rakastas, some elves). Ruler: none. Typical NPC: free-spirited forester, hunter, or elite longbow archer. Patron: Tawnia.

Queen Catherine plans to deforest Wyndham some day in favor of farming. Unfortunately, the fierce people of Wyndham—hunters and foresters at heart—oppose the plan and have revolted many times against the monarch's autocratic rule. Wyndham is often thought of as a dangerous bandit haven by the common Bellaynish folk.

Viscounty of Farfield. Capital: Wickerton (population 6,600—rakastas, elves, humans, halflings). Ruler: Lady Meghan "The Gaunt," daughter of Sir Melville Parringstoke (Honorbound fighter). Typical NPC: rich farmer. Patron: Pax Bellanica.

Immortals of Bellayne

The rakastas have adopted Immortals of other cultures, primarily those of the humans that founded Bellayne more than five centuries ago. The cat-people revere these Immortals in their own way now.

Belbion (Vanya): Patron of pride, honor, war, and conquests. She is a favorite of warriors and those who believe rakastan culture to be inherently better than any other.

Felidae (Calitha): Patron of oceans, travelers, adventurers, good fortune, and merchants. She is an Immortal common to both rakastas and elves.

Kagyar: This "foreign" dwarven Immortal was primarily followed by dwarves in Penwick and northern Farfield. His following then grew among rakasta coal miners working with the dwarves. Being the only male in the rakastan pantheon, he became a favorite among masculine rakasta males

with an axe to grind against the high-brow, stuffy, Bellaynish philosophic establishment.

Pax Bellanica (Tarastia): Patron of rakastan justice and peace. It is often in her name (and in Belbion's) that the rakastas mount holy crusades against the goblins.

Tawnia (Ordana): Patron of the people of the forests in general, defender of hunters, archers, and druids.

Shazak, Ator, and Cay

In my homeland and other states of the eastern Savage Coast, the reptilian peoples of the Great Bayou are seldom seen. I have, however, encountered them in various other places and have briefly visited each of their nations. From the diminutive caymas to the large, vicious gurrash and the wise shazaks, the lizard folk present great diversity. I do not know enough about them to judge their reactions to the Red Curse, but I do believe the actual creation of these races might be related to it in some fashion. I would welcome them as a part of my quest if for no other reason than to study them.

—The Chronicle of the Curse
by Don Luis de Manzanas

The western end of the Savage Coast is home to three races of lizard kin: shazaks in the Kingdom of Shazak, gurrash in the Kingdom of Ator, and caymas in the Kingdom of Cay. Each of the races was created by the mages of Herath, who intended them as servants and slave-warriors, but all three proved unsuitable and were released into the Bayou or nearby areas. Since that time, the lizard kin have struggled upward to varying levels of civilization.

The Kingdom of Shazak

The oldest of the three races of lizard kin, shazaks are very similar to the lizard men described in the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome. Ancient Herathian records indicate that these lizard men existed in the region at least 3,000 years ago, when they were servants and slaves to the human and elven mages who founded Herath while the araneas were disappearing from the region.

The mages later performed experiments to improve the primitive lizard kin. The results were less than satisfactory, and the Herathians eventually abandoned them in the Bayou.

Few of those first lizard kin survived, but those who did grew tough and cunning. They gathered under the leadership of a warrior named Shaz, eventually taking her name as their own ("shazak" means "child of Shaz"). With perseverance and some faith in the Immortals (especially Ka), the early shazaks became more advanced. Later lizard kin were adopted into the tribes of shazaks, and the tribes grew stronger as the toughness of the swamp dwellers was combined with the learning of those who had lived in Herathian cities.

Centuries later, the shazaks were forced to leave the Bayou. The gurrash, another abandoned Herathian experiment, began to displace them. The shazaks adapted to the forests north of Herath, which was a positive factor in their evolution as a species. No longer confined to the wetlands of the Bayou, they developed primitive art forms and a written language.

It is because of the gurrash that the shazak tribes eventually united behind a single war leader almost 250 years ago. Their leader is known as the Shaz, honoring the race's ancient guide. The role of Shaz is now hereditary, much like a king in human society. A Shaz usually has at least one Wokan and one Shaman acting as advisers.

Herath has long been a quiet ally of Shazak because the shazaks form a buffer state on Herath's northern border, keeping the goblinoids and rakastas away. Some caravans even travel all the way to Ah'roog to trade with the shazaks. The Herathian traders then return with pelts, pottery, feathers, rare woods, bat guano (a great fertilizer), live monsters, and such. Some nobles of Herath also hire shazaks as mercenaries. While not as ferocious as gurrash, shazaks are more dependable. Herathians have traditionally used them as expendable front-line troops in times of war. Though Herath is currently at peace with Bellayne, this policy intensified the conflict between Shazak and Bellayne over the forested area between Ah'roog and Bellayne's Marches of Wyndham.

Rakastan war parties have been known to raid into Shazak as far as the battle site called the Rakasta Grave. During the past fifty years, several battles have taken place in that vicinity, within as little as a mile of each other. The shazaks have never been able to really threaten Bellayne's border because of the ominous presence of the hated gurrash to the west. Gurrash incursions into Shazak are as common as they are savage.

In the past century, shazaks have learned to domesticate huge bats found in the caverns under the hills of T'lak between the Shady and Gatorbone Rivers. One or two bats can usually be found in each village, with more in Ah'roog. Shazak has a corps of Beast Rider "knights" who use these huge bats, which are also sometimes used as mounts by important Shamans and Wokani or by the Shaz.

Capital and Ruler

Capital: Ah'roog (population 7,500—mostly shazaks, a few tortles and caymas). Ruler: Shaz XII "The

Slick," son of Shaz XI "No Tail." The tribal domain includes the forested area between the Bayou's eastern edge and the rakastan Forest Marches of Wyndham. Patron: Ka'ar.

Ah'roog is a large town composed of communal wooden longhouses, each occupied by an extended shazak family unit. This town also contains a few longhouses reserved for visitors and even one devoted to tortles. To the west of the town are large burial mounds, each devoted to an individual family. About two dozen huge mounds—some built to cover entire trees—are devoted to the older, more honored families of shazaks. Numerous smaller mounds are used for newer families or those from other towns. Paths wind among the mounds and the trees, and the mounds are painted in symbols and geometric patterns. Shazaks hold these mounds sacred.

The Kingdom of Ator

The gurrash were a dismal failure on the part of Herathian wizards, at least as far as the wizards were concerned. It was hoped that a cross between shazaks and alligators would produce a tougher warrior race to fill the ranks of Herath's armies. This mix resulted in the creation of the gurrash. The gurrash turned out to be very tough, very tall, and quite bloodthirsty, while remaining very crude and totally unruly. Early specimens had a tendency to turn against Herathian human troops. They were also absolutely incompatible with shazak troops, whom they viewed as tasty food.

A few attempts at developing a more controllable breed took place, but a large batch of the creatures escaped from the laboratories, forming an uprising and wreaking havoc among the Herathians. After this bloody episode, the surviving gurrash fled into the Bayou despite Herath's frantic efforts to eradicate the whole species. Herathian rulers hired bounty hunters to rid their area of the frightening gurrash threat. It made bounty hunting a booming business for a few decades, but the gurrash quickly outbred the hunters, causing the hunt to become increasingly perilous.

Once the bounty hunters had been discouraged from preying upon them, the gurrash quickly turned against the shazaks, who populated the Bayou at that time. Within a century, shazaks had all but abandoned the Bayou. Fortunately for the shazaks, the gurrash stopped their territorial expansion at the edges of the Bayou, preferring to remain in the murky waters of the wetlands. Since then, the gurrash population has stabilized. Diseases, parasites (many introduced by Herathians), and limited food cause weaker hatchlings to perish.

Occasionally, when the number of gurrash increases beyond what the Bayou's ecology can sustain, the creatures go on a massive rampage into one of their neighbors' territories. Gurrash Shamans usually incite these raids on behalf of their patron Immortal, Goron. The raids are now sacred ritual in which a warrior supposedly gains Goron's favor by spilling the blood of foes in the most savage ways imaginable. Bringing back food is of course useful to the community, but the Shamans secretly understand that the true goal is to limit the gurrash population lest they learn to feed upon one another.

Gurrash monarchs establish themselves by savagery and cruelty. Their rule is based on fear, brutality, and support of the Shamans. A gurrash who equals or bests the current ruler in savagery during a raid—as attested to by at least three Shamans—can challenge the current ruler. A challenger who defeats the current ruler establishes a new hereditary dynasty (until another challenger comes up). This is what recently happened when Ator defeated King Osh III. She killed the aging king and crowned herself Queen Ator I, thus supplanting the Oshite dynasty with her own Atorite dynasty. She then renamed the nation after herself. She has ruled for 25 years. Should she die unchallenged or undefeated, one of her heirs would become King or Queen Ator II.

Some trading does occur between the gurrash and their mysterious neighbors of the Wallaroo Grasslands. A gurrash Shaman once noticed that if he left something at the southwestern edge of the swamp, the next day something else might be there, usually something of use. After a century, gurrash have come to believe that Goron takes these goods and repays them with something else.

Of course, this is just myth. In fact, wallaras (chameleon men) inhabit these grasslands and conduct the trade. The first "trade" was accidental; when a wallara found a gurrash's huge stone axe, he was so surprised that he left his backpack on the site and walked back to camp with his discovery. Over the years, wallaras found out that if they left something of value after picking up a gurrash item, soon more gurrash objects would be found there. It has led to a regular trade with the unwitting gurrash, and spots have become known for the kinds of items expected there. In some areas food is traded, while in others it could be weapons, shells, or ornamental stones.

The gurrash never raid or even dare venture into the grasslands, for they believe the region to be Goron's home, taboo to all upon pain of death. The wallaras recognize this taboo and use their camouflage ability to preserve the gurrash beliefs. This provides them with some wealth and a precious immunity against the gurrash's fearsome raids.

Capital and Ruler

Capital: Gurr'ash (population 3,200—gurrash, a few shazaks, and a handful of cayma slaves and

"snacks"). Ruler: Queen Ator I "Old Gray Fangs," slayer of King Osh III. The tribal domain includes all of the Bayou. Patron: Goron.

The Kingdom of Cay

The last creation of the Herathians was nearly a success. Abandoning attempts to create gigantic and deadly servants, Herathian wizards produced the small caymas. They were bred to become slaves and builders, smart enough to understand construction plans, agile and quick enough to do the job well and without delay, yet small enough to make them weaker than their guards.

The plan almost worked, but the caymas were terribly pretentious and not as bright as expected. Their pride got in the way when a construction flaw needed correcting or when the caymas simply disagreed with the architects. Endless bickering ensued between caymas and their Herathian masters. In the end, caymas deliberately allowed flaws to remain in the Herathian monuments without alerting the architects. Exasperated by a rash of catastrophes, Herathians gave up on all lizard kin experiments and dumped the caymas north of the Bayou.

The tastes of modern caymas are unusual. Never bred to become architects, the caymas still attempt to build things to prove themselves. They lack understanding of sound architecture and engineering, leading them to erect such dubious structures as the Great Citadel of Cay (see below). While these constructions get in the way of raiding gurrash, they would not last long against the experienced military of Bellayne or Herath. However, that is unimportant to the caymas, who are still very proud of their accomplishments.

The people of Cay copied the social structure of other kingdoms and established their own monarchy. Queen Ssa'a presently rules and has been behind the cayma expansion into the open lands north of Cay. The caymas have learned a very primitive way of raising herds of wild aurochs. For herding, they have domesticated small lizards, which they harness to tiny war chariots. Caymas trade some of their auroch meat with the shazaks. They also trade a little *cinnabryl* from a mine near Hwezzah. Cayma forging and metalworking is quite primitive, but they are learning.

Capital and Ruler

Capital: Tu'eth (population 8,900—all caymas). Ruler: Queen Ssa'a IV "Silver Tail," daughter of Queen Roha'a II. The tribal domain includes forested land north of the Bayou. Patrons: Kutul, Cay.

Tu'eth is built around a mesa about 50 feet high and perhaps 500 yards in diameter. The mesa is surrounded by the Great Citadel of Cay, an amazingly rickety assemblage of planks, tree trunks, bamboo, stones, ropes, leather, nets, and random portions of adobe walls with arrow slits. All of these things contrive to form a 20-foot-tall palisade that circles the mesa's walls at a distance ranging from 10 to 100 yards, up and down the hills and crags, using large trees and boulders as anchor points. A 15-foot-wide moat full of muck surrounds the entire thing. Several towers of respectable height (but debatable stability) overlook the palisade at rather unpredictable intervals. Rope bridges, catwalks, and flimsy looking drawbridges hang just about everywhere, running from one level to another like some sort of mad, three-dimensional maze. Any enemy who climbs the palisade will most likely just become hopelessly lost. At the center of the citadel, within the mesa itself, are the Queen's burrows.

Surrounding the citadel in a haphazard manner are small mounds with wooden doors and round windows; these are the homes of typical citizens.

Immortals of the Lizard Kin

For further information on Immortals, refer to "The Campaign" chapter.

Cay (Terra): Patron of the Kingdom of Cay, earth, life, fertility, and good luck.

Goron (Demogorgon): Patron of Ator, victory, bravery, and death. This reptilian queen of evil interfered with Herathian experiments, instilling the gurrash with the racial instincts that make them brutal and bloodthirsty.

Ka'ar (Ka): Patron of Shazak, trade, wealth, and better life in general.

Kutul (Kurtulmak): Patron of Cay, war, fire, and territorial gains. Kutul contrived to have the caymas create a caste of warriors headed by Shamans and devoted to him. Kutul balances Cay's lawfulness with his own brand of chaos.

Herath

I am one of the few adventurers to have been allowed—through a clever bit of subterfuge on my part—into the former capital of Herath, Belphemon. When I visited, in the guise of a wizard's apprentice, the city was magnificent. Tall, gleaming buildings thrust into the sky. Spells of many sorts created light, offered cooling breezes, lifted people to high entrances, and accomplished a myriad of other tasks.

As I understand it, these clever mages have long striven to restrain the Red Curse. Perhaps they also hold the key to its eventual dissolution.

—The Chronicle of the Curse
by Don Luis de Manzanas

Herath is known by most people as the Kingdom of Mages, and rightly so; roughly three-quarters of its population are wizards. The country has other nicknames as well: the Lands of the Great Magus (because its ruler is a powerful sorcerer) and the Land of Equality (because all races are truly equal there and people are measured only by their magical prowess).

Warning! *Only the DM should read any further in this chapter, because Herath is also the home of a secret, one potentially pivotal to the SAVAGE COAST campaign.*

The Magiocracy of Herath

Many inhabitants of the Savage Coast believe that araneas—evil and highly intelligent giant spiders—once ruled the lands now called Herath. According to legend, the araneas began disappearing many hundreds of years ago, and human and elven mages moved in and founded the current nation of Herath. Legend says that the araneas were spiderlike in form, an image loathsome to other races. Consequently, from rakastan cottages to goblin yurts, unruly children are told tales of scary araneas coming to carry away disrespectful youngsters.

In truth, araneas do still exist. Contrary to popular belief, they are seldom evil and are much more common than anyone realizes. The mages who founded Herath were actually araneas in human and elven form. Realizing that humanoids would one day dominate the Savage Coast, the araneas used magic to evolve a special shapechanging ability (see the racial descriptions in the "Player Characters" chapter). As a result, an aranea can look like any race: human, dwarf, elf, half-elf, lupin, rakasta, shazak, orc, half-orc, goblin, hobgoblin, or gnoll. However, araneas can only reproduce in spider form. Fortunately for them, their secret is practically undetectable. Had the araneas not learned to conceal their identities, neighboring realms would have destroyed their nation long ago. Disguised as humans and elves, araneas secretly remain the ruling race in Herath, and they exist outside that nation as well. Over the centuries, many of the spider people have been born to aranea spies and refugees in other nations. For example, many lupin-seeming araneas have been born and raised in Renardy, with no one outside the family ever knowing the difference.

The nation of Herath accepts few visitors from outside its borders, but people who have traveled there report a very egalitarian society. Gender is not a status issue in Herath (male and female are equal in aranean society, so araneas believe that male and female are equal in any race). Neither does race seem to be a status issue. In Herath, lupins, rakastas, shazaks, humans, and others all live in apparent harmony. Though members of a particular family are almost always of the same apparent race, communities mix race freely; rakastas have no subculture, for example. In truth, araneas are typically convinced of their own superiority over members of other races, and nonaraneas never rise to positions of true power in Herath. Only araneas can become nobles, or take the Noble kit, in Herath.

Over the centuries, araneas have developed a pragmatic approach to their precarious situation. Young araneas are taught from birth that they are two different people. One is the true aranea, the other is a humanoid alter ego. The aranea's two personalities are distinct, with separate sets of personal history and experience, both of which the aranea learns to accept as legitimate. This outlook ensures that each aranea plays his separate roles to perfection. That the race can perpetrate such a hoax demonstrates the power of the aranean intellect.

Occasionally, the practice does go wrong. A few araneas split their identities so completely that neither of their personalities is even aware of the other. Such psychotic araneas automatically take on their humanoid shape and personality when in the presence of humanoids, forgetting their aranean nature. Then, when in the presence of araneas in arachnid shape, they revert spontaneously to their

natural form with no knowledge or memory of their humanoid alter ego. Needless to say, the resulting gaps in memory for each identity are traumatic. In some cases, the unfortunate aranea not only forgets its dual nature, it actually loses the ability to change ever again. Naturally, the araneas hide such individuals away in order to keep their secret safe.

No one knows for sure exactly where araneas came from. Some who know of their existence speculate that the spider people are a creation of the Immortals, an experiment left unchecked. Others surmise that they came from another world. In any case, several aranean realms are concealed in Mystara, though none so well as that in Herath.

Savage Coast araneas were once concentrated in Belphemon, their former capital. Beneath that site lies a huge network of caverns that have seen aranean development. There, primitive paintings and carvings remain as a silent testimony of how long the creatures existed below the earth, but the race soon ventured forth into the woodland above. Armed with their incredible abilities, the araneas advanced unchecked within the confines of their dark forest, a thick wilderness only rarely visited by other races. By the time they reached the edge of their forest, the araneas had already developed their shapechanging skills. In disguise, they began mingling with their neighbors and soon came to perceive humanoids as their inferiors. They believed that the Immortals put the "savages" there for the araneas' benefit: as succulent edibles at first; as convenient armies next; and finally as a precious source of labor, revenue, and sometimes even magical innovation. However, in the Immortals' infinite wisdom, the "savages" were made dangerous and wonderfully varied so that the gift could not be abused, and the araneas would always be inspired to improve themselves.

Posing as humanoid wizards, the araneas slowly established a magiocracy over the region of modern Herath. Four domains arose, each ruled by a powerful wizard, who in turn swore allegiance to the "Great Magus in the Forest." Today, the overall aranean realm stretches from the western borders of Bellayne to the northern edge of the Dark Jungle on the Orc's Head Peninsula and reaches an average of 140 miles inland from its shore on the Western Sea.

The nonaraneas of Herath are accustomed to thinking of their ruler as a quiet and reclusive wizard who stays in his tower at the heart of the dark Forest of the Magus. They have had no reason to complain about their treatment or suspect that the ruling nobility is a "monstrous" race. On occasion, the Great Magus visits—in humanoid shape, of course—the towns and courts of his vassals. Most of Herath's dealings with visiting dignitaries from other nations are done through envoys of the Crown or vassal nobles. So far, no monarch abroad has had reason to suspect anything unusual in Herath—at least nothing that is not in keeping with a magiocracy. Further, the Forest of the Magus is off limits to all uninvited people. Of course, none of the local folk would enter the forest anyway since it is rumored to be haunted and infested with monsters (a perfect place for wizards).

Until recently, the Great Magus lived in the great citadel of Belphemon, where araneas enjoyed going about in their spider shapes. There, the most brilliant aranean minds helped the Great Magus determine his nation's fate and rule his subjects. The citadel reached 100 feet into the air and ten times deeper below ground, connecting with ancient caverns where many more araneas dwelt. Six great fortresses delineated the Great Magus's domain, each home to aranean patrols (in humanoid shape) that guarded the edge of the woods. The fortresses connected with each other and with the citadel through tunnels and caverns. Each fortress was a magical building that marked the edge of the Magus's wizardly power. An invisible web of magic emanated from the citadel and covered the forest. Linked to the Great Magus's mind, the web allowed the ruler to sense everything inside the forest, including the predominant feelings and physical sensations of visitors.

All this changed about a year ago, however, when the Immortals warred and magic stopped working all over the world for several days. The lull period was especially devastating in Herath. Protective magic within the realm was lost, and Herathian wizards suddenly found themselves bereft of spells. Seizing the opportunity, goblinoids on the border quickly mobilized, invading and sacking the capital. The Great Magus barely escaped death by traveling to a nearby castle, Asgamoth, which has since grown into a new capital city. At the same time, the sensing web dissipated, as did an aranean spell confining the Red Curse to the area of the Savage Baronies. The Great Magus and his advisers are currently working to reestablish the sensing web; in the meantime, Herathian border patrols have been dramatically increased. As for the spell confining the Red Curse, restoring things as they were seems beyond the abilities of the araneas, likely requiring the cooperation of most or all of the Immortals.

Herath maintains peace with its neighbors because war would simply be too costly. The Great Magus is far more interested in political intrigue and magical influence than in open warfare. He maintains a delicate balance among his nation's neighbors. The presence of Terra Leãoça, a small Vilaverdan colony, is useful to Herath since the colony is a pain in Bellayne's flank. The Magus quietly supports the colony, in exchange for which Herathian merchant ships can sail through its territorial waters without interference.

Capital and Ruler

Capital: Asgamoth (population 24,000—mostly araneas). Ruler: Wizard-King Yahav IV "The Watcher,"

son of Queen-Sorceress Amsharai II. The hereditary royal domain includes the Forest of the Magus and the ruins of Belphemon, the former capital (once home to more than 100,000 people, now a vast ruin inhabited by perhaps 3,000 refugees and a like number of monsters). Typical NPC: Noble wizard. Patron: Yehm.

Dominions of Herath

Each dominion's ruler is an aranea in another form. All are loyal to the Grand Magus; while dictators on a local level, the dominion rulers listen closely to the Grand Magus.

Viscounty of Berevrom. Capital: Amion (population 4,300—araneas, humans, elves, rakastas). Ruler: Lady Beryam "The Deft," daughter of Lord Balmoroth of Berevrom (Noble transmuter, "rakasta"). Typical NPC: soldier, thief, or aranea spy. Patron: Enebaan.

County of Enom. Capital: Nezhev (population 5,700—araneas, humans, dwarves, some tortles). Ruler: Count Disbaal "Eight-Eyes," son of Lord Enzuth of Enom (Noble diviner, "human"). Typical NPC: miner or gem cutter. Patron: Negyavim.

Duchy of Ensheya. Capital: Sorodh (population 10,900—araneas, humans, elves, halflings). Ruler: Duke Yaluughu "The Dark Weaver," son of Lord Ezer of Ensheya (Militant mage, "elf"). Typical NPC: farmer or woodcutter. Patron: Yehm.

Viscountcy of Hethzya. Capital: Shahav (population 18,500—araneas, humans, halflings, some rakastas and lupins). Ruler: Lord Mazioth "The Hook," son of Lord Gerphemon of Hethzya (Swashbuckler mage/thief, "half-elf"). Typical NPC: merchant or soldier. Patron: Shaya.

The Wildwoods. Administrative center: Tower of Yedom (population—mostly araneas, with some humans and elves). Ruler: Lord Yezarath of Pazphezu, appointed overseer (Webmaster druid, "elf"). Typical NPC: forest hunter or lonely wizard. Patron: Shaibuth.

The Wildwoods are mostly wilderness, barely touched by civilization. The Great Magus is still debating whether to let it be reduced by woodcutters and farmers to expand the nation or save it for future generations. The nobility is widely divided on the fate of this unclaimed territory. More pressing is the need to curb the incessant encroachment of rakasta hunters from Bellayne's Wyndham Marches.

Immortal Patrons of Herath

More information on the Immortals can be found in "The Campaign" chapter.

Enebaan (Masauwu): Patron of diplomacy, intrigue, influence, masquerade, rulers, spies, and thieves.

Negyavim (Iliric): Patron of Herathian wizardry, but also of greed and insensitivity. His followers use the local mining of gems and the dwarves' skillful crafting of these precious stones as a source of sacrificial gifts to this greedy Immortal.

Shaibuth (Eyrindul): Patron of forest dwellers. This elven Immortal took on the aranean cause as an afterthought, merely as a means to compete against Korotiku (Yehm), his old rival.

Shaya (Valerias): Patron of beauty and love, especially unrequited love. Valerias was attracted by the true love felt between a human paladin and an aranea who appeared human; rather than expose her secret, the aranea bit her lover, poisoning him, and then ended her own life. The tragic tale touched Valerias, and she has since found a wide following among Herathians.

Yehm (Korotiku the Spider): Araneas are an old favorite of Yehm, one of those Immortals who no longer remembers ever being mortal. It is tempting to say he once was a mortal aranea, which would attest to this race's ancient existence in the universe, but no proof exists of this. Nevertheless, Yehm is the grand patron of araneas, even more so than of the lupins.

Other Places

Beyond the Savage Coast proper lie several lands. Inland from the coast is a vast expanse known as the Yazak Steppes. Hanging from the western end of the coast proper is the Orc's Head Peninsula, a land of dense jungles and savage inhabitants. While the Red Curse does not directly affect these lands, I believe part of the key to its origins can be found in these other lands, perhaps in the Great Northway, perhaps somewhere on the peninsula, perhaps beyond on the Arm of the Immortals. These areas warrant much study.

—*The Chronicle of the Curse*
by Don Luis de Manzanas

Besides the nations already covered, a number of other interesting places and cultures exist on the Savage Coast. This chapter offers information on how to use some of those areas. Included are the Orc's Head Peninsula, the Serpent Peninsula, the Arm of the Immortals, and the Yazak Steppes. Most of these areas lie within the Haze (see "The Curse and the Legacies" chapter).

The Orc's Head Peninsula

The Orc's Head Peninsula is a vast area that is home to a number of interesting countries and peoples. A brief overview of the most important ones follows. The manscorpions, enduks, and wallaras are all part of the background of the Red Curse; special attention should be paid to them.

The Wallaras

The wallaras are the technologically primitive, yet spiritually rich people who inhabit the grasslands on the Orc's Head Peninsula's northern shore. Once a proud and wise race, the wallaras were reduced to their current primitive state through the action of the araneas.

Wallaras look like tall, slender humans, but their skins are covered in stripes of many different colors. They have innate magical powers, such as the ability to activate a *dimension door* and the ability to emulate a *ring of chameleon power*. Sometimes called chameleon men, wallaras are distantly related to dragons.

The wallaras are a peaceful people who seek—and often find—spiritual enrichment. They are nomads now, but they once ruled a vast civilization that included the now-ruined city of Risilvar, located in the Forbidden Highlands. Wallaras seldom leave their homeland and, consequently, know little of the outside world. During the wars of the last few years, the wallaras remained mostly untouched; the gurrash on their eastern border never venture into wallaran lands, the phanatons to the south are peaceful, and other races are too far away to be a threat.

The Phanatons

A phanaton looks something like a cross between a monkey and a flying squirrel, with the markings of a raccoon. The phanatons of the Orc's Head Peninsula are peaceful primitives dwelling in tree-houses far above the forest floor in their homeland of Jibarú. The phanatons are closely tuned to nature and are protectors of the plants and animals of their homelands. Phanaton society is similar in many ways to shazak society, though it has a much higher proportion of druids. Latecomers to civilization, phanatons are just beginning to institute a central government and system of laws. They seem to be headed toward a collective tribal government with an advisory council of druids and shamans.

During the recent wars, the phanatons were attacked by manscorpions. Though a few villages were lost, most of the inhabitants escaped and were eventually able to drive back the manscorpions, who were unaccustomed to fighting in any kind of foliage.

The Enduks and the Ee'aar

The enduks are winged minotaurs; the ee'aar are winged elves. At one time, many centuries ago, the enduks had a budding civilization on the western edge of the Orc's Head Peninsula. Their nation of Nimmur was a deeply religious society which had just opened communications with the other great local civilizations of the time—wallaras, ee'aar, and Nithians. Unfortunately, the Nithians' arrival on the Savage Coast caused a mass migration of manscorpions, who eventually arrived in Nimmur.

The enduks welcomed the manscorpions, who eventually betrayed them, driving them out of their homeland. The ee'aar helped the enduks escape westward, to the long peninsula called the Arm of the Immortals. There, the enduks rebuilt their civilization beside their friends the ee'aar. They continued with their peaceful religious ways but also established a strong military. The ee'aar already had a dichotomy of military types and mystic thinkers.

The enduks dreamed of recapturing Nimmur, and eventually, just within the last decade, an opportunity came. A combined force of enduks and ee'aar invaded the lands of Nimmur, but they met with limited success. While unable to destroy the manscorpions, whose numbers had grown tremendously, they were able to establish a foothold in the city of Um-Shedu and its surrounding territory.

The Manscorpions

The manscorpions are the rather brutal race which drove the enduks out of Nimmur, taking the land for themselves. When the enduks were driven away, the manscorpions were cursed by the Immortal Ixion, who caused them to burn in the light of the sun. They spent the next few centuries occupying the cities of Nimmur and constructing underground passages between them. Presently, the manscorpions are quiescent, but the opportunity for war may come again at any time. They are upset at the presence of the enduks and the ee'aar in Um-Shedu but have thus far been unable to come up with a strategy for retaking the city.

The Arm of the Immortals

West of the Orc's Head Peninsula, across the sea, lies a long finger of land called the Arm of the Immortals. As mentioned, the main civilizations of the ee'aar and the enduks reside on the Arm. A couple of colonies, sponsored by powers on the Savage Coast, sit on the eastern shores of the peninsula. The kingdoms of Eshu (the land of the enduks) and Aeryl (run by the ee'aar) are located inland on high plateaus in the mountain range that dominates the center of the Arm of the Immortals. On the far side of the Arm—at least according to the tales of seafarers—lie several states dominated by "demi-ogres," huge humanoids said to be descended from the offspring of humans and ogres.

The rest of the Arm is mostly wild and unexplored. Vast expanses of forests, untouched by humanoids, cover the north, while huge jungles dominate in the south. The Arm covers several climates and numerous geographical features, with a wide variety of wildlife, including many sorts of monsters. In addition, rumors insist that ancient and powerful sites are hidden within the landscape of the Arm. It is even said that the Immortals themselves can be approached through secret portals high in the mountains of the Arm. However, few have explored the Arm and returned, so the facts of the matter are largely unknown—at least for the present.

The Yazak Steppes

The Yazak Steppes run from Hule in the east to the region north of the Orc's Head Peninsula. These are actually several different, disconnected sets of steppes. Once home to rakastas and lupins, the steppes have been taken over by goblinoid tribes.

The five "great tribes" of goblinoids in the steppes are dangerous to the coastal lands only when they unite into massive hordes that sweep down to raid for food and treasures. The five tribes are the Hupkur, which consists of hobgoblins and ogres; the Huptai, composed of hobgoblins and goblins; the Dankut, mostly orcs with a few trolls; the Kuttai, which includes orcs and goblins; and the Gosluk, made up entirely of goblins. Many of the members of these tribes are Beast Riders. Like lupins, the hobgoblins of the steppes ride dire wolves; goblins ride worgs; and orcs and half-orcs ride specially-bred boars (which sometimes make tasty treats for the worg mounts).

The Hupkur tribe—which occupies the lands north of Renardy, Bellayne, and Herath—is the strongest and most well organized of the five tribes. A recent alliance between the Kuttai and the Dankut, the tribes closest to the Savage Baronies, provides a substantial threat.

Several small tribes are not allied with any of the larger groups. Of these, the most important is the Tai-luk tribe, a group of goblins occupying a small territory north of the Bayou. The Tai-luk goblins are important only because no other tribes inhabit that rather inhospitable area and because of their proximity to Cay, which could lead to a conflict if the goblins raid the caymas' aurochs.

Goblinoid Names

To hobgoblins, the name for their race is hup, with the "u" sound pronounced the same as the "oo" in *book*. Orcs call themselves kut, with the same short "u" sound. The name goblins give themselves is gos, in which the "o" is long, rhyming with *gross*. Other goblinoid races refer to goblins as tai; this is pronounced *tah-ee*, though said more quickly, such as in *tie*. Ogres are kur, pronounced *koor*, both among themselves and by others.

Thus, the names of the five great tribes have the following compositions:

Hupkur: Hobgoblins (hup) and Ogres (kur).
Huptai: Hobgoblins (hup) and Goblins (tai).
Kuttai: Orcs (kut) and Goblins (tai).

Dankut: Orcs (kut).
Gosluk: Goblins (gos).

Note that dan (sounds like the "a" in *want*, with a nasal overtone) is the tribal name for orcs of the Yazaks (kut is the racial name). Similarly, luk, pronounced as the word *look*, is the tribal name for goblins of the Yazaks. The Tai-luk are using the hobgoblin/orc word for themselves, plus the goblin tribal name.

The names of goblinoid individuals follow the same styles as racial and tribal names, with short syllables and harsh, guttural sounds. Most names have only one or two syllables, as do most goblinoid words; they have an uncomplicated language. Several acceptable syllables are suggested in the following text, and the DM should feel free to come up with others as needed. These 50 syllables can be mixed or used alone to create goblinoid names, insults, and other words.

Table 10.1: GOBLINOID WORD COMPONENTS

baj	kal	bek	kez
bil	kig	boz	kod
bup	kub	dag	laj
dez	lep	dij	lig
dok	loz	dut	lub
gaz	paz	gep	peb
gid	pij	gok	pog
guj	pul	hab	taj
het	tep	hig	tik
hok	tog	huj	tuz
jaj	zad	jeg	zet
jit	zil	jod	zog
juz	zub		

History of Invasions

Goblins and their kin have lived in the Yazak Steppes for almost 3,000 years. Over 20 centuries ago, their hordes destroyed the elven and Oltec civilizations of the region, forcing both elves and humans back into a savage state. When the Red Curse was created, goblinoids took little notice, content in their raids and occasional wars against encroaching humans. When the tortle civilization grew large enough to seem threatening, goblins swept down from the steppes once more. What few pockets of human and demihuman culture remained shrank to fortified, permanent settlements, but they were not vanquished.

Those fortifications remained and swelled, first with the arrival of Traldar colonists, then again with immigrants from Ylaruam, Yavdlom, and Thyatis. Surprisingly, the goblinoids seemed content to let these petty baronies be. After all, they fought among themselves—first over territory, later over mining rights to *cinnabryl*.

Now, with the spread of the Red Curse and the Legacies tempered by *cinnabryl*, the goblinoids realize, too late, that the current coastal civilizations have become too powerful to be swept away as the ancient elves and tortles were. Nonetheless, among goblins, pride is greater than wisdom; one powerful leader could still lead them to ride down from the steppes once more.

Recently, a renegade Inheritor named Igor Balazar has been working to unite the tribes of the Yazaks; more about his efforts can be found in the adventure "Divided We Fall," the last chapter of this book.

Other Goblinoids

There are also a few scattered tribes of goblinoids on the coast itself, notably near the Savage Baronies, and north of Robrenn. The coastal goblinoids are known collectively as the Yazi.

The easternmost Yazi are the gnolls of El Grande Carrascal. These are generally mounted nomadic warriors who ride the plains (on horses) and raid any outlying settlements. Surprisingly, the gnolls are relatively civilized compared to the other Yazi. They will negotiate, they engage in honest trade as well as raids, and they do not always attack on sight.

West of the gnolls are the southern goblins, such as the Black Bellies tribe. These warlike goblins cause many problems for the Savage Baronies. Some are mounted warriors (on wolves), but most are at their best when on foot. Fortunately, these goblins are not as numerous as the gnolls to the east. Also, because the most recent battles ended in clear victories for the Savage Baronies (notably Cimarron), the goblins are less inclined to attack outlying settlements.

Goblinoids north of Robrenn are referred to as the Carnax, Cassivellonis, and Pyctis. Only the Pyctis are goblins; the others are orcs. These goblinoids are very similar in mannerisms and

philosophies to the Yazak goblinoids, except these Yazi are never mounted warriors. The Pyctis trade with the Yazak tribes, and through the Pyctis, the orcs trade with the Yazaks as well. While these goblinoids are a constant threat to Robrenn, they are currently making only disorganized raids because all of their strongest leaders were slain in the recent wars.